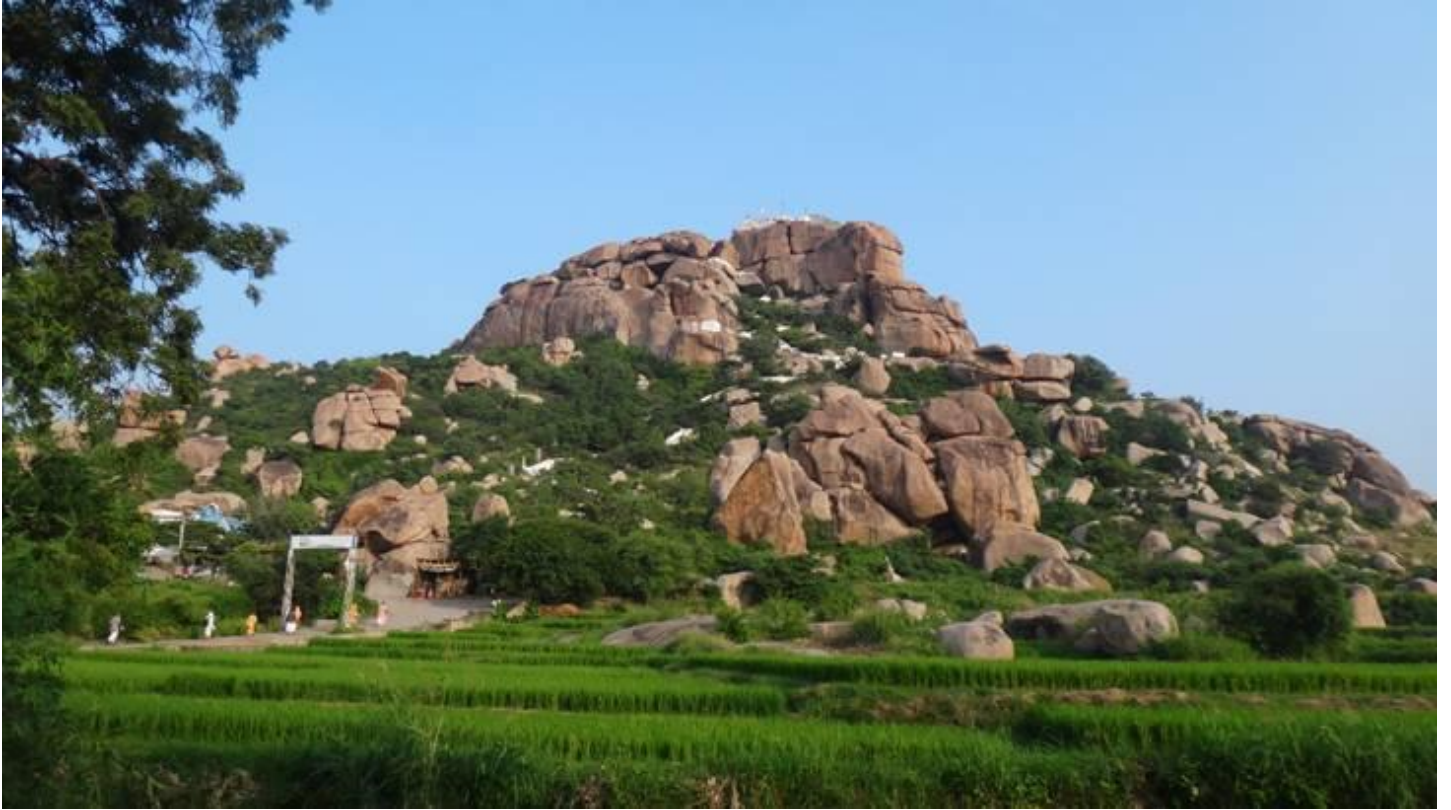


Sri Hampi Dhama Yatra

Kishkinda Ksetra



Hampi is a village in northern Karnataka state, and is identified with the historical Kishkinda, the Vanara (monkey) kingdom mentioned in the Ramayana. At Hampi there are many important sites related to Ramayana, namely Shabari's cave and sacred Pampa Sarovar, where Shabari, a great devotee of Lord Ramacandra lived; Anjaneya Hill which is the Birthplace of Hanuman Ji; Yantroddharak Anjaneya Temple where Hanuman first saw Lord Rama and His brother Laxmana; Rsyamuka hill where Sugriva took shelter and lived for several years when banished by his elder brother Vali from his kingdom Kishkhinda; Maalyavant Raghunatha Swamy Temple where Lord Rama and Laxmana stayed for 4 months during the rainy season after Sugriva had been coronated on the throne; Kodanda Rama Temple where Sugriva was crowned as the King of Kishkhinda; Sugriva's cave where Sugriva hid the jewels of mother Sita while she was been taken away by Ravana, and other places. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu visited Hampi during His South India tour as mentioned in Sri Caitanya Caritamrta Madhya-lila 9.316. Lord Nityananda also visited here during His travels.

The name of this place is derived from Pampa, which is the old name of the Tungabhadra River on whose banks the city is built. Located within the ruins of Vijayanagara, the former capital of the Krishnadeva Raya's Vijayanagara Empire, this place predates the city of Vijayanagara and continues to be an important religious center. Saint Vidyaranya established the seat of Vijayanagara Empire in 1336 A.D, with the help of his devotee disciples Harihara and Bukka. The empire later became famous for its support towards reconstruction of temples throughout India. It also became renowned for re-establishment of Indian culture, its support for music, art and literature. With the prime purpose of caring for the people and their welfare, this empire stretched physically covering Karnataka, Andhra and Maharashtra and became a by-word for golden rule. By 1500 CE, Hampi-Vijayanagara was the world's second-largest medieval-era city after Beijing, and India's richest at that time, attracting traders from Persia and Portugal. Hampi formed one of the core areas of the capital of the Vijayanagara Empire from 1336 to 1565, when it was finally laid siege to by the Deccan Muslim confederacy. The ruins are classified as UNESCO World Heritage Site, listed as the Group of Monuments at Hampi.

Hampi is 13 km from the town of Hospet, which has nice accommodations available and has a railway station. It is in Bellary district and is 376 km from Bangalore, 385 km from Hyderabad and 266 km from Belgaum.

Places in and around Hampi:

1. Shabari's Cave
2. Pampa Sarovar
3. Anjaneya Hill - The Birthplace of Hanuman Ji
4. Sri Malyavanta Raghunatha Swamy Temple
5. Sri Kodanda Rama Temple
6. Sugriva's Cave
7. Yantroddharak Anjaneya Temple
8. Rsyamuka Hill
9. Matanga Hill
10. Sri Vijaya Vitthala Temple
11. Sri Purandara Das Mandapa
12. Sri Hazari Rama Temple
13. Bala Krishna Temple
14. Sri Ugra Nrsimhadeva Temple
15. Hemakuta Hill
16. Sri Virupaksha Temple

1. Shabari's Cave

Shabari's Cave is the place where the great tribal devotee of Lord Ramacandra, Shabari lived and perform her *tapasya* (austerities). There is actual spot where Lord Ramacandra and Laxmana came and sat, and partook ber (berries) picked by her. Shabari's cave is next to sacred Pampa Sarovar.

Shabari's Pastime: Shabari was a hunter's daughter and belong to the Nishadha tribal community. The night before her marriage, she saw that thousands of goats and sheep were brought by her father, which were to be sacrificed for the marriage dinner. Moved by compassion, during the early hours of the morning, she left her home and ran away in search of a spiritual master. Many *yogis* and *gurus* rejected her since she was of low caste. Finally, after days of traveling, she met great Sage Matanga Rsi at the foot of the mountain Rsyamuka. She accepted him as guru, serving him with devotion. During the last days of sage Matanga, Shabari served him with great attention and care. Pleased with her service, Matanga Rsi blessed her that one day certainly Lord Ramacandra along with His bother Laxmana will come to meet her.

Many years passed by (as per the life span of the *Treyta yuga*) and Shabari had become an old woman. She continued to live in the same *ashram* awaiting Lord Rama. Always meditating on her guru's words, Shabari waited and waited for the arrival of Lord Rama. Every day, although it was difficult for her to walk, due to old age and infirmity, Shabari would still go out of her *ashram early morning* and pick ber fruits for Lord Rama. She would pluck a fruit, first taste it, and if it was sweet she would put it in her basket and discard the bitter ones. She wanted to give the good and sweet fruits to Lord Rama. The thought never came into her mind that she should not taste the fruits before they were offered to a deity. Thus collecting a few fruits, Shabari went back to her ashram and eagerly anticipated Lord Rama's arrival.

Meanwhile, after mother Sita was kidnapped by Ravana, Lord Rama and Laxmana, in separation of Sita, had traversed hundreds of miles and eventually came upon an enormous monster named Kabandha. Kabandha explained to Them that close to Pampa Sarovara, Shabari was waiting for Them, to serve Them.

Arrival of Lord Rama: Then Rama and Laxmana came to Pampa Sarovara. There, They saw some caves on the banks of the lake and a little straw hut. There, sitting on the ground on a small *kusha* grass mat was an old emaciated lady. That lady, was indeed, Shabari. Even though hundreds of other yogis were waiting to receive Lord Rama in their *ashrams*, Lord Rama went only to Shabari's *ashram* because of her sincere devotion. She was wearing just a bark of tress, her hair was matted, she was constantly with tears in her eyes chanting the holy names of Lord Rama. When she saw Rama and Laxmana, she immediately recognized Them, because by the grace of her guru, she was meditating on Rama coming for many, many years with such anticipation, eagerness. *Srila Rupa Gosvami, tells that the price of Krishna consciousness is this eagerness. And to cultivate this feeling of separation makes us very, very eager.* Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

*yugayitam nimesena chaksusa pravrsayitam
sundayaitam jagat sarvam govinda-virahena me*

Feeling your separation Govinda, the whole world is like a dreary void and each moment is like a yuga. But in that eagerness of separation, how much intensely he was chanting the holy names of the Lord, how intensely he was eager to serve the Lord! Shabari had such faith in her guru. She knew that Rama would come. Years and years and years passed and she sat there just doing her meditation and doing her seva and now the fruit of all of her prayers, of all of her *sadhana*, had manifested. She had a chance to personally serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead. After offering her *dandavat pranam*, she offered him a sitting place and offered him prayers and gathered some of the forest fruits to satisfy Rama and Laxmana.

On seeing her most beloved Lord Ramacandra, Shabari became ecstatic and said, "*There were so many exalted yogis waiting for your darshan, but you came to this unworthy devotee. This clearly shows that you will neither see whether a devotee lives in a palace or humble hut, whether he is erudite or ignorant neither see caste nor colour. You will only see the true Bhakti. I do not have anything to offer other than my heart, but here are some berry fruits. May it please you, my Lord.*"

Saying so, Shabari offered the fruits she had meticulously collected for Lord Rama. When Rama was tasting them, Laxmana raised the concern that Shabari had already tasted them and therefore unworthy of eating. To this Lord Rama said, "*I have tasted many types of food, but nothing equals these berries offered with such devotion. You taste them, then alone will you know. Whomsoever offers a fruit, leaf, flower or some water with love, I partake it with great joy.*" So in her enthusiasm to serve Rama, she will take each little fruit and take a bite of that and if it was bitter, she would put it aside for her to eat later and if it was sweet she took it out of her mouth and present it to Rama. Now according to the standards of deity worship, this is very offensive, but because of her love Lord Ramacandra accepted the saliva of her mouth as the sweetest part of the fruit. Lord Krishna tells in *Bhagavad-Gita* chapter 9 verse 26, "*Fruit, flower, water, even a leaf, if it's offered with love I will accept it.*" It is the love that makes everything sweet for Krishna. Shabari was so poor, she did not have nice plates, she didn't have nice house, she didn't have nice food, but she had love.

Then Lord Rama narrated to her the incident of Sita's kidnapping. Shabari said, "*Across this Pampa Sarovar is Rishyamukha Mountain where Sugriva lives. Sugriva is one of the chiefs of the monkeys. He has been exiled from his kingdom and his wife Ruma has been abducted and is being held captive by his brother Bali. No one in the world can understand*

what Sugriva is going through better than you, and no one in the world can understand what you are going through better than Sugriva. If you help him to get his wife and his kingdom back, then he will search the entire earth over and over again, relentlessly, until he finds Sita and brings her back. And his minister Hanuman is the most empowered transcendental person who can do anything."

Touched by her pure Bhakti, Lord Rama and Laxmana bowed down at her feet. Rama wanted to see the *ashram* of Matanga Rsi. So Shabari gave him a tour. Laxmana and Rama were walking beside her and she showed them that this is where they performed their *yajnas* - because in *Tretayuga* *yajna* was the *yuga dharma* - and it was still burning even though over a decade had passed since they left. She said, "These are the flowers that they made into the garlands to decorate their beloved Lord." And the garlands were still fresh and fragrant. She said, "All the sages they just wore tree barks and here is the place where after washing their clothes they would dry them," and there were tree bark hanging and they were still wet from being washed. Because of their love and their devotion to Rama, everything was still fresh as it was years and years before when they left it, just so that Rama could see it. Lord Rama and Laxmana were so happy by the simplicity of Shabari.

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur tells that the first principle of true devotional service or bhakti is **simplicity**. Simplicity means without duplicity. It means to have no ulterior motives. It means to really deeply be satisfied with what's really important - the opportunity to serve. For a devotee just the chance to serve, whether we have millions or billions of dollars, or whether we are living on a piece of straw on the bank of a lake wearing tree bark, it really doesn't make much difference.*

That value in life is simplicity. That makes us so dear to Krishna. King Prataprudra, even though he was the king of the entire domain of Orissa, he had a simple heart. He was happy serving Lord Caitanya whether he was sweeping the street or ruling over armies and treasuries. And it was the simplicity of his heart that made him so dear. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu gave us this message.

Lord Rama told Shabari, "You have satisfied me by the simplicity of your love and devotion. Now you can go and join your guru again and all of your god brothers and god sisters." By his grace Shabari understood that her life was perfect and she in meditation, she sat in the sacred fire. Suddenly she was consumed by the fire, but she had such faith that a moment later she had a spiritual body and she came out from flames. She was no longer emaciated with matted hair. She had a heavenly celestial body with such beauty, gowned with such elegance. And then with the permission of Rama and Laxmana she returned to join her guru in the loving service of the Lord, which was her only desire. When Rama came to meet Shabari, her joy was not in seeing Rama; her joy was in serving Rama. 'Don't try to see Krishna; try to serve Krishna so that he is happy to see you.' Yes, she was seeing the Supreme Absolute Truth, the personality of Godhead face to face, but her joy was in serving him and in pleasing him.



Surroundings on the way near Shabari's Cave



Entrance to Shabari's Cave



Inside the Shabari's Cave



Exact spot where Lord Ramacandra sat and partook the berries (ber) offered by Shabari. This spot is marked by the Lotus Feet of Lord Ramacandra at Shabari's Cave



Shabari offering berries (ber) to Lord Ramacandra



Ancient temple with the lotus feet of Lord Ramacandra and Laxmana at Shabari's Cave



Lotus feet of Lord Ramacandra and Laxmana



Tribal lady selling berries (ber) at Shabari's Cave



His Holiness Radhanath Swami Maharaj discussing the pastimes of Lord Ramacandra and Shabari at Shabari's Cave and Pampa Sarovar

2. Pampa Sarovar

Pampa Sarovar, is one of the five sacred *sarovars*, or lakes, located to the south of the Tungabhadra River. Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityananda Prabhu had visited Pampa sarovar during Their travels. Another one of them is *Man Sarovar* which is in China (Tibet). Pampa Sarovar is just next to Shabari's cave. Shabari used to take water from her daily needs from this Sarovar. Pampa Sarovar is regarded as the place where Pampa, a form of Parvati, performed penance to show her devotion to Siva. There is a small Pampa Ambika temple next to the *kunda*.

This Sarovar finds a mention in Ramayana. Pampa Sarovar is mentioned as the place where Shabari, a disciple of the Rsi Matanga, directed Lord Rama as He journeyed southwards on His quest to redeem Sita. *Caitanya Caritamrta Madhya-lila* 9.316 states that Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu came to Pampa sarovar during His South India tour - "Eventually Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu arrived at a lake known as Pampa, where He took His bath." Lord Nityananda also visited this place during His travels. Sri Vrindavana Dasa Thakura mentions in *Sri Caitanya Bhagavata Adi Lila* chapter 9: "Thereafter Sri Nityananda went to Gomati and bathed in the waters of Gandaki and Sona. He climbed the Mahendra Hill where He offered obeisances to Lord Parasurama. From there He travelled to Haridvara, the source of Mother Ganga. He visited Pampa, Bhima, Godavari, Benva and in the Bipasa (or Vyasa) river He remained submerged in the water for a while." Pampa sarovar is also famous for the Pushti Marg Vaishnavas. Here Srimad Vallabhacarya had performed *Srimad-Bhagavatam katha* in the 16th century.



Pampa Sarovar



Transcendentalists discussing the pastimes of Lord Rama at Shabari's Cave and Pampa Sarovar

3. Anjaneya Hill - The Birthplace of Hanuman

Anjaneya Hill is the birthplace of Hanuman and is located in the centre of Anegundi area (original Kishkinda). Hanuman is the personification of seva. He perfected his life through selfless service to Sri Rama. It was Hanuman who delivered the message to Sita after discovering her, then delivered Sita's message back to Rama. Hanuman was prominent in building the bridge across the ocean to reconnect Rama and Sita. Hanumanji was the most instrumental to fight the battle against the Rakshasas and assist Rama in overcoming Ravana. And it was Hanuman who was sent by Rama after the great war of Lanka to bring Sita back to be reunited with Him. Hanuman, all of the incredible pastimes that he performed, he never took credit for anything. He was constantly chanting the holy names of the Lord and he gave all credit to Lord's grace, who was always present within the holy names:

*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare*

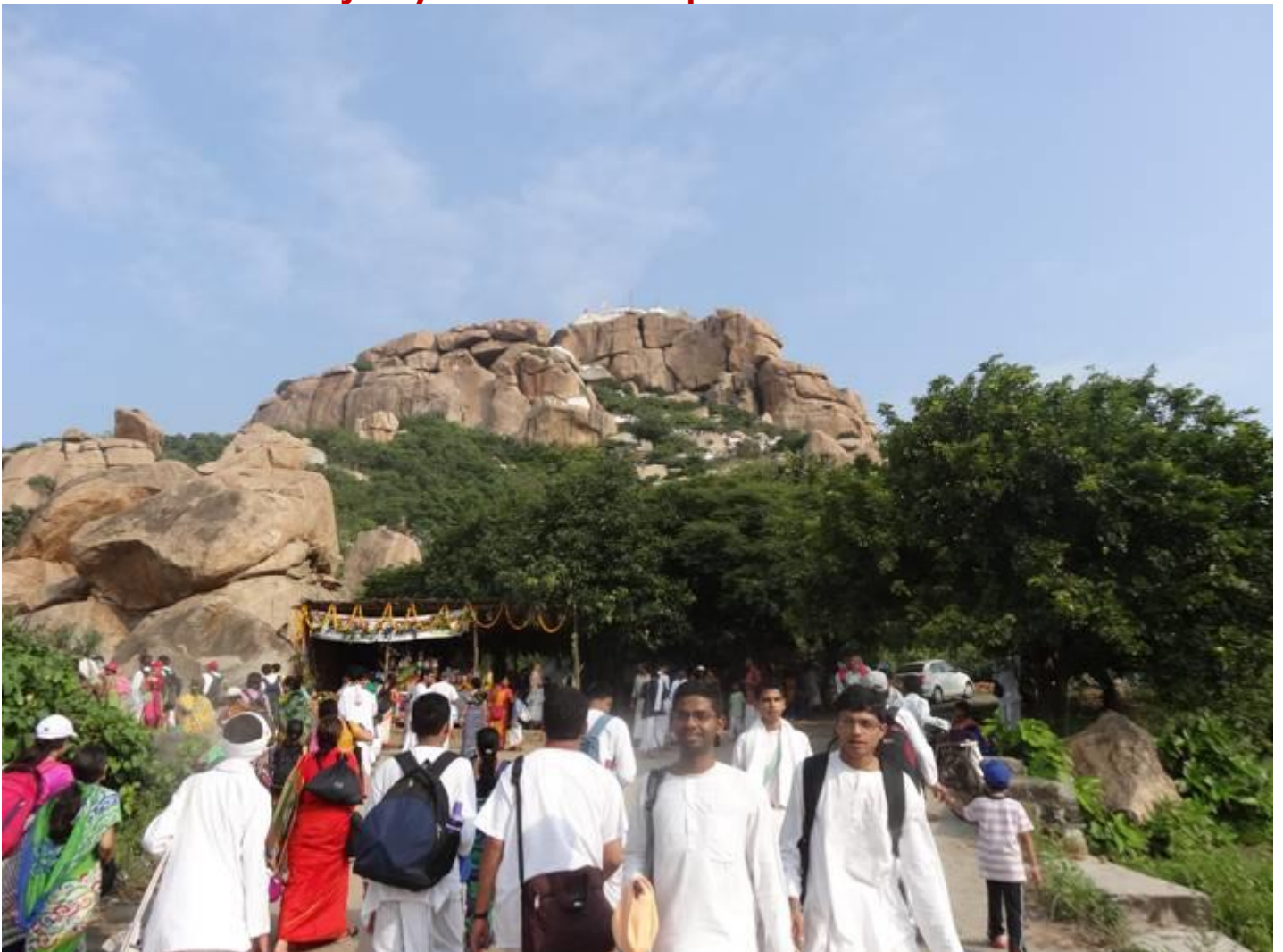
This chanting of Krishna's names, Rama's names wakes us up, because in this age of kali people are so soundly sleeping. The loud chanting of the holy name is required. Hanuman lives forever to give protection, inspiration and empowerment wherever devotees sincerely chant the Lord's holy names, because he knows there is nothing that gives pleasure to the Lord greater than being the servant of the servant of the servants; that is what he lived for.

At the top of the Anjaneya hill is temple dedicated to Hanuman. He was born to Anjana. Thus Hanuman is also known as *Anjaneya* and his birthplace as *Anjaneyadri* (Anjaneya's hill). On the way up there is one place called *kesari tirtha*, the cave where Hanuman's father Kesari, lived. The deity of Hanuman is carved on the rock. There is also a small shrine for Lord Rama and Sita inside the temple. The hill has 555 steps to climb up to the temple and it takes approx. 7-10 mins to climb. One can see Anjaneya hill from the Hampi side of the river as one trek along the Kampa Bhups's (the riverside trek) path. In

Anegundi is the old Raghunatha temple where worship still continues. In sanctum there is small Vishnu deity about 3 feet long reclining on *Sesanaga*. In the back of the temple on the right side is a separate shrine to Lakshmi. Not far from the temple is the *samadhi* of Sripad Madhvacarya's disciple Narahari Tirtha.



Anjaneya Hill - the birthplace of Hanuman



Devotees climbing up the Anjaneya Hill



Temple altar dedicated to Anjana, the mother of Hanuman at Anjaneya Hill Temple



View from Anjaneya Hill Temple

4. Sri Malyavanta Raghunatha Swamy Temple

Sri Malyavanta Raghunatha Swamy Temple is on the road toward the Kampli. It is here that Lord Rama and Laxmana stayed during the 4 months of rainy season (*chatur masya*) after Sugriva had been coronated on the throne. Lord Rama and Laxmana also stayed here when Hanuman and others went in search for Sita. The deities of Lord Rama and Laxmana are in sitting positions, with a standing Sita, and Hanuman Ji kneeling near Them carved from a boulder. These are the only Deities of Lord Ramacandra in sitting position. The mood here depict how Rama and Laxmana were discussing the means to save kidnapped Sita. Down the hill from here heading west is *Madhuvan*, which has a little temple of Hanuman. It was here where the monkeys halted to enjoy the gardens of fruit after Sita was found.



Sri Malyavanta Raghunatha Swamy Temple

It is here that Lord Rama and Laxmana stayed during the 4 months of rainy season (*chatur masya*) after Sugriva had been installed on the throne.



Sri Malyavanta Raghunatha Swamy Temple



Devotees at Sri Malyavanta Raghunatha Swamy Temple



Their Lordships Sri Sri Sita-Rama, Laxmana, Hanuman

Deities of Lord Rama and Laxmana are in sitting positions, with a standing Sita, and Hanuman Ji kneeling near Them carved from a boulder. These are the only deities of Lord Rama in sitting position.



Sri Malyavanta Raghunatha Swamy Temple



Devotees listening to Sri Rama *katha* at Sri Malyavanta Raghunatha Swamy Temple



Transcendentalists at Sri Malyavanta Raghunatha Swamy Temple



Rama-katha at Sri Malyavanta Raghunatha Swamy Temple



Transcendentalists at Sri Malyavanta Raghunatha Swamy Temple

5. Sri Kodanda Rama Temple

Sri Kodanda Rama Temple marks the place where Sugriva was crowned as the King of Kishkinda. The rectangular *garbha-griha* of the temple contains 15 feet tall standing deities of Lord Rama, Sita, Laxmana and Sugriva. These deities are carved out of a natural boulder. Sri Kodanda Rama Temple is situated towards the east of Hampi at the end of the Virupaksha Bazaar. A small pathway from Virupaksha Bazaar at the east end leads along the river to Kodanda Rama Temple. This temple faces Chakra tirtha, the most sacred bathing ghat in the river. Close to Sri Kodanda Rama temple is Rsyamuka hill where Sugriva took shelter and lived for several years when banished by his elder brother Vali from his kingdom Kishkinda.



Sri Kodanda Rama Temple



Sri Kodanda Rama Temple



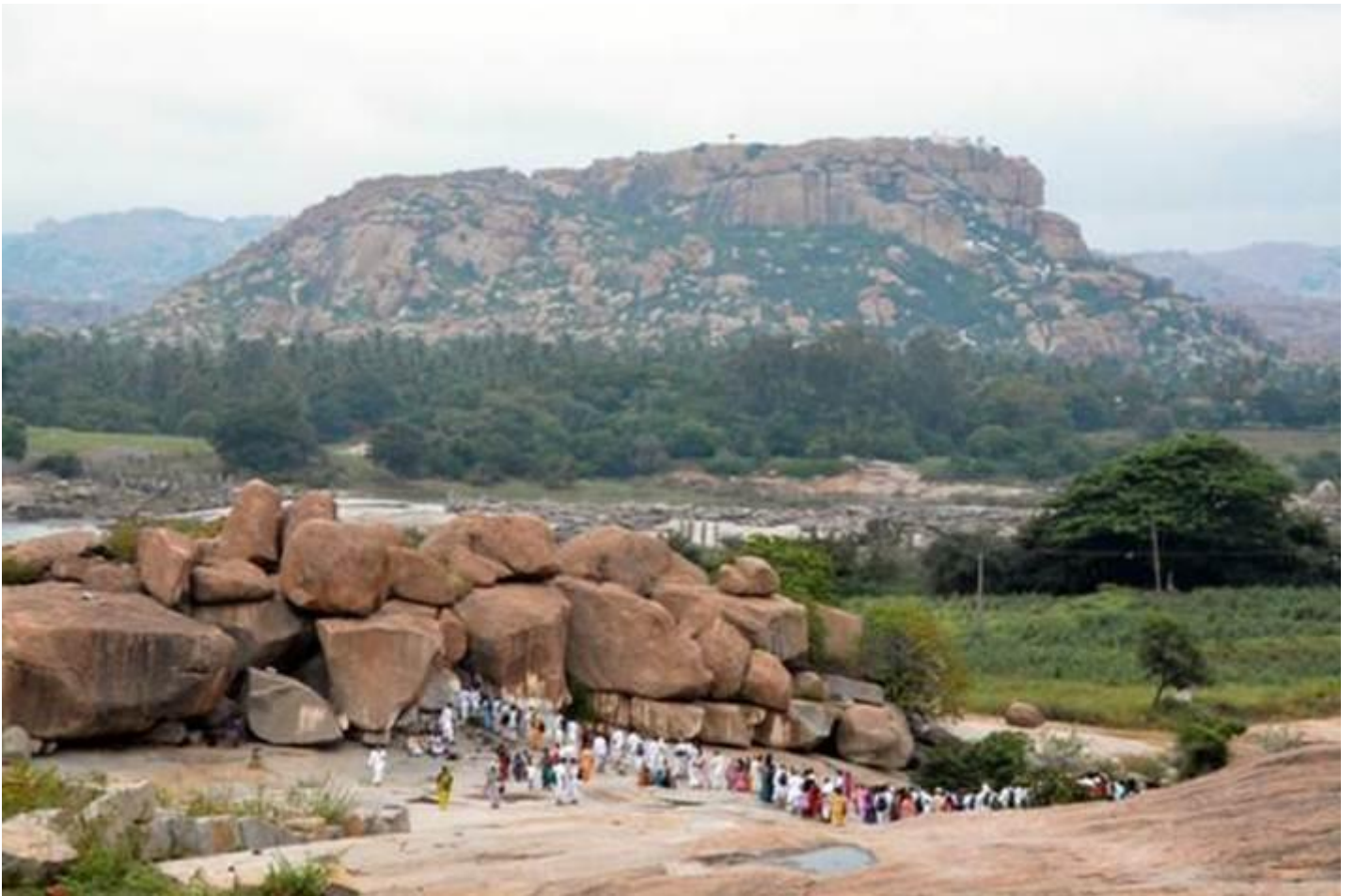
Sri Kodanda Rama Temple



Surroundings around Sri Kodanda Rama Temple at Sri Hampi Dhama

6. Sugriva's Cave

Sugriva's Cave is the place where Sugriva hid the jewels dropped by Sita, when the demon king Ravana was taking Her. This is a naturally formed cave by huge boulders one leaning over the other. This is located almost on the river shore close to Sri Kodanda Rama temple. The colored pattern at the rock in locale parlance is called *Sita Konda*. A number of carved footprints can be seen on the floor of this flat surface. This depicts the footprints of Lord Ramacandra and Laxmana. Near the Cave at the riverside Sugriva met Lord Rama and Lakshmana when they came here in search of goddess Sita.



Sugriva's Cave



Sugriva's Cave



Sugriva's Cave



Foot prints of Lord Sri Ramacandra and Laxmana at Sugriva's Cave

7. Yantroddharak Anjaneya Temple

Yantroddharak Anjaneya Temple is the place from where Hanuman first saw Lord Rama and His brother Laxmana. Situated right behind the Sri Kodanda Rama temple, this is one of the most sacred places in Hampi. The temple is dedicated to Hanuman. The temple has a very interesting story behind its origin. Sri Vyasa Tirtha, a great scholar saint during the reign of King Krishnadeva Raya, used to go to very calm spots on the banks of river Tungabhadra and meditate interrupted. One day, while he was meditating in a hillock near Chakra tirtha, an image of Hanuman kept coming to his mind. This happened only at that particular spot and nowhere else, not even in nearby hillocks.

Sripad Madhavacharya (an incarnation of Hanuman) appeared in the dreams of Sri Vyasa Tirtha and instructed him to install a deity of Hanuman next time. The next time Vyasa Tirtha saw the image in the middle of his meditation, without any delay, he drew the image from his mind on to a rock using an *angara* (coal used by *brahmanas* using puja performance). To his surprise, a monkey came to life from the rock and jumped out of the rock and his drawing would disappear. He repeated the process of drawing and every time, a monkey would jump out of the rock and the drawing would disappear. This happened 12 times.

Full of surprise, Sri Vyasa Tirtha finally decided to bind the image of Hanuman in a *yantra*. A small temple was built there and hence the temple has the name *Yantroddharak Anjaneya*. In the core of the *yantra* is the deity of Hanuman in *padmasana* position. This is probably the only temple of Hanuman in a sitting position. The *yantra* here is a form of binding which looks like a six-cornered star. The star is encircled in a circle with flames going outwards giving it the drawing look of a sun. A closed, benzene-like ring of 12 monkeys holding each other's tails can also be found around the star and the sun which forms the outermost structure of the *yantra*.



Yantroddharak Anjaneya Temple

This is the place from where Hanuman first saw Lord Rama and His brother Laxmana. Situated right behind the Sri Kodanda Rama temple, this is one of the most sacred places in Hampi.

8. Rsyamuka Hill

Rsyamuka hill were Sugriva took shelter and lived for several years when banished by his elder brother Vali from his kingdom Kishkinda. Due to Rishi Matanga's curse on Vali that he cannot enter the Rsyamuka hill, this was the only place on the earth which was free from the coming of Vali. When Vali was chasing Sugriva, being very tired and distressed by Vali, Sugriva remembered the curse of Rsi Matanga for Vali, and he took shelter here.



Rsyamuka Hills

9. Matanga Hill

Matanga Hill, the name comes after the great sage Matanga who used to live on this hill in *Treta Yuga*, the period of Ramayana. Sage Matanga was a great devotee. He was the spiritual master of Shabari. During the last days of sage Matanga, Shabari served him with great attention and care. Pleased with her service, sage Matanga blessed her that one day Lord Ramacandra along with His bother Laxmana will come to meet her. This is also the place where Sugriva benefited from the magical protection of the sage Matanga who had placed a curse of death on Vali, if he dared to enter Rsyamuka Hill, which is close by. A beautiful view of Achyuta Raya temple can be seen from on top of this hill.



Matanga Hill

10. Sri Vijaya Vitthala Temple

Sri Vijaya Vitthala Temple is where the famous Lord Vitthala came from Pandarpur when the Pandarpur temple was attacked by the Mughals. Lord stayed here for some time and was worshipped by His devotees before returning back to Pandarpur. Local legend has it that Lord Vitthala, when He had moved here, found it too grand to live in and thus returned to His own humble home in Pandarpur. The famous *Stone Chariot* is situated to the east of the temple hall. The stone wheels of the chariot actually revolve.

The carving on this temple gives an insight into the architectural splendour achieved by the artisans of Vijayanagar Empire. The temple consists of 56 musical pillars. When tapped gently, these pillars produce musical sounds. These pillars known as musical pillars or *Sa-Re-Ga-Ma* pillars, after the *sapta-svaras* of Indian classical music. The British wanted to check the reason behind this wonder and so they cut two pillars to check if anything was there inside the pillars that were producing the sound. They found nothing but hollow pillars. Even today we can see those pillars cut by the British. Construction of this temple started during the reign of King Krishnadeva Raya in the year 1513 AD. The project was so colossal that the additions continued for almost 5 decades until the Empire fell down in the year 1565 AD and was never completed.



Sri Vijaya Vitthala Temple

This is where the famous Lord Vitthala came from Pandarpur when the Pandapur temple was attacked by the Mughals.



Stone Chariot at Sri Vijaya Vitthala Temple

The famous *Stone Chariot* is situated to the east of the temple hall. The stone wheels of the chariot although extremely heavy, they actually revolve.



Musical pillars at Sri Vijaya Vitthala Temple



Devotees listening to Krishna *katha* at Sri Vijaya Vitthala Temple

11. Sri Purandara Das Mandapa

Sri Purandara Das Mandapa is a small open pillared pavilion dedicated to the famous Vaishnava poet Purandara Das who lived in Hampi. It is here that poet Purandara Das sat and composed the devotional songs. Even today the devotional songs composed by him are sung at the Carnatic music (the south Indian classical music) concerts. He composed more than 75,000 devotional compositions. They were carried over generations by the oral tradition. But today only about a thousand or so compositions are known to exist. A small sculpture of Purandara Das with *tambura* (an ancient stringed musical instrument) can be seen at the pavilion. The pavilion is located at the river shore near Sri Vijaya Vitthala temple. This is one of the areas at Hampi where people perform religious rituals. The pavilion is almost at the edge of the river and that during monsoon season the river water touches the platform or even submerges it sometimes. Every year a classical music concert is held in this area to celebrate the birth anniversary of Purandara Das. Usually they are held for 2-3 days during the months of January/February. Musicians from national and international repute participate.



Sri Purandara Das Mandapa



Way to Sri Purandara Das Mandapa



Sri Purandara Das Mandapa



Sri Purandara Das Mandapa



View of river from Sri Purandara Das Mandapa

12. Sri Hazari Ram Temple

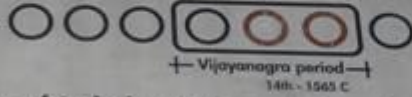
This temple for Lord Rama is popularly called "Hazari Rama Temple" or "Hazara Rama temple" because of the large number of Ramayana panels on the walls. This temple was the private place of worship of the royal family. It was originally called Hajana Rama, which in Telugu language means "the palace temple". The Ramayana epic is carved in detail. Incidents in the story like Dasaratha performing a sacrifice to beget sons, the birth of Lord Ramacandra, His exile into the forest, the abduction of Sita and the ultimate fight between Lord Ramacandra and Ravana are all carved in a vivid manner. In these panels, the story of Rama and through it the triumph of good over evil is brought out. Through the temple is small, it is fine example of the skill of Vijayanagar's sculptors. On one of the wall there are two rare depictions of Vishnu as the Buddha.

13. Bala Krishna Temple

Bala Krishna Temple was built by Krishna Deva Raya in 1513 A.D. to commemorate his victory over Gajapati, the ruler of Orissa. After the victory he got the Deity of "child Krishna" and brought it to Vijayanagar as war trophy. He then built this temple for worship of the Deity. This deity is now resting in the Government Museum at Madras.

KRISHNATEMPLE

Historic Time-line:



Situated to the north of the image of **Lakshmi Narasimha**, is a temple with an inscription of **Krishnadevaraya**, dating to **AD 1513**.

The inscription records that an image of **Bala Krishna** was brought here by the king from a temple in **Udayagiri** during his **Orissa campaign**, and enshrined in the mahamandapa.

This large and ornate east-facing temple complex is built in the typical **Vijayanagara style**.

One of the pillars in the ardhamandapa is noteworthy as all the **ten avataras of Vishnu**, including the rare one of **Kalki**, are carved on it. **Kalki** is depicted as a seated figure with a horse's head.

Bala Krishna Temple at Sri Hampi Dhama

खुला सभामंडप है। इसके अलावा इस मंदिर की पूर्व दिशा में स्थित लोकपावनी एवं एक विशाल बाजार मंडपों से सुसज्जित है। मंदिर की भित्तियों में पुराण, भागवात और समकालीन समाजिक द्रष्टावतिका मूर्ति शिल्प है। महामण्डप के स्तम्भों पर भगवान विष्णु के दशवतारों का उत्कीर्णन किया गया है। मंदिर मुख्य प्रवेश द्वार के सम्मुख लगभग ५०० मीटर लम्बा पथयुक्त बाजार एवं पवित्र जल कुण्ड है।

KRISHNA TEMPLE

THIS LARGE AND ORNATE, EAST FACING TEMPLE, WAS CONSECRATED WITH AN ICON IN BALAKRISHNA, BROUGHT FROM UDAYAGIRI (ORISSA), BY KRISHNADEVARAYA, AS INDICATED IN AN INSCRIPTION DATED 1513 AD.

THE TEMPLE COMPLEX BUILT IN PANCHAYATANA STYLE WITH TWO ENCLOSURES, HAS THE MAIN SHRINE WITH THE SANCTUM, A VESTIBULE, PILLARED PAVILIONS AND HALLS, A DEVI SHRINE AND MANY SUBSHRINES. IN ADDITION THERE IS A KITCHEN TOWARDS THE SOUTHEAST OF THE MAIN SHRINE AND A SEPARATE STORE, HOUSED WITHIN THE FIRST ENCLOSURE TO THE SOUTHWEST. THE GRAND TOWERED EASTERN GATEWAY IS AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE OF VIJAYANAGARA ARCHITECTURE. THE TEMPLE WALLS ARE CARVED WITH DEPICTIONS OF THE BHAGAVATA, THE PURANIC STORY OF LORD KRISHNA AND THE LIFE OF THE TIMES.

THE PILLARS OF THE MAHAMANDAPA HAS SCULPTED DEPICTIONS OF THE TEN INCARNATIONS OF LORD VISHNU. THE MAIN ENTRANCE LEADS OUT TO A 500 MTS. STREET BAZAR AND A SACRED WATER TANK THEREAFTER, TO THE EAST.



Bala Krishna Temple

14. Sri Ugra Nrsimhadeva Temple

Sri Ugra Nrsimhadeva is nearby to the Bala Krishna temple. Deity is 6.7m tall monolith of Ugra Nrsimhadeva, the half-man-half-lion incarnation of Lord Krishna, sitting in a cross-legged position. An inscription nearby states that it was hewn from a single boulder in 1528 during the reign of Krishnadeva Raya. The original image contained His consort Lakshmi devi sitting on His lap. This image was destroyed during the Mughal invasion. Currently only a hand of the goddess resting on His waist can be seen. Nearby is a shrine with huge 3 meter high Siva-linga called *Badavilinga*. It is permanently surrounded by water that comes through an ancient channel.



Ugra Nrsimhadeva Temple

कुन्डली मार कर बैठे आदिशेषनाग भगवान के सिर के ऊपर छतरी के रूप में अपने सातों फन फैलाए हुए हैं। यह मूर्ति चतुर्भुज है जिसके हाथ भग्न हो चुके हैं। उनकी बायीं गोद में वाम ललितासन में बैठी हुई लक्ष्मी खंडित हो चुकी है। देवी का केवल दाहिना हाथ ही बचा है जो भगवान को पीछे से मनोहर ढंग से घेरे हुए हैं।

यह प्रतिमा एक बड़े चौकोर कक्ष में स्थापित की गई है।

LAKSHMI NARASIMHA TEMPLE

THIS MAGNIFICENT MONOLITHIC LAKSHMI NARASIMHA THE FOURTH INCARNATION OF LORD VISHNU STANDS AT A HEIGHT OF 6.7 MTS. IT IS ONE OF THE FINEST EXAMPLES OF VIJAYANAGARA SCULPTURE. NARASIMHA IS SEATED ON THE GIANT COILS OF ADISHESHA THE SACRED GUARDIAN SNAKE OF VISHNU ITS SEVEN HOODS ACTING AS A CANOPY ARCHED BY A KIRTIMUKHA TORANA IN FRONT.

THE ROOF OF THE CHAMBER ENSHRINING THE STATUE IS MISSING WHICH HAS LED TO MUCH WEATHERING AND DAMAGE TO THIS MONOLITHIC SCULPTURE. THE FOUR ARMS OF THE STATUE WITH ITS VARIOUS ATTRIBUTES HAVE BEEN BROKEN AND THE SEATED FIGURE OF HIS CONSORT LAKSHMI ON HIS LEFT LAP IS MISSING. THE FACE TOO HAS BEEN DAMAGED WHICH MISLED PEOPLE INTO BELIEVING THAT IT WAS THE UGRANARASIMHA OR ANGERED NARASIMHA. THE PRESENCE OF THE RIGHT HAND OF THE GODS EMBRACING THE LORD AT THE BACK IS PROOF OF IT BEING THAT OF LAKSHMI NARASIMHA.

THE STATUE WAS CONSECRATED BY PRIEST KRISHNABHATTA AT THE BEHEST OF KRISHNADEVARAYA IN 1528 AD AS PER THE LITHIC RECORD NEAR BY.



Ugra Nrsimhadeva Temple



Badavilinga Temple

15. Hemakuta Hill

Hemakuta Hill is south of the Virupaksha temple. Lord Siva did penance on the Hemakuta Hill before he married Parvati (Pampa). This was also the place where Lord Siva burnt Kama, the God of lust. The exact place where Kamadeva was burnt is the site of Manmath tank close to Virupaksha temple. This sacred hill lies to the right of the Virupaksha temple.



Hemakuta Hill

16. Sri Virupaksha Temple

Known as the Pampapathi temple, it is a temple related to Lord Siva, situated in the Hampi Bazaar. Temple is located at the foot of Hemakuta hill and is the core of the village of Hampi. It predates the founding of the Vijayanagar Empire. The temple has a 160 foot (49m) high tower at its entrance. Apart from Lord Siva, the temple complex also contains shrines of the goddesses Bhuvaneshwari and Pampa. What was once a small shrine, in course of time, developed into a large complex under the Vijayanagar Empire.



Sri Virupaksha Temple



Sri Virupaksha Temple



River near Sri Virupaksha Temple



Transcendentalists at Sri Hampi Dhama



His Holiness Radhanath Swami Maharaj during Sri Hampi Dhama Yatra in 2014



Hospet Railway station

Hampi Yatra 2014 - Transcripts from HH Radhanath Swami Maharaj lectures:

1. Hampi Yatra - Day 1 morning: Birth of Hanuman
URL: <http://radhanathswamiyatra.com/humpi-udupi-yatra-2014/radhanath-swami-on-the-birth-of-hanuman-2014-yatra-hampi-day-1-morning/>
Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=730037OCV14>
Audio: <http://audio.iskcondesiretree.com/05 - ISKCON Chowpatty/96 - Yatra/2014 South India Yatra/01 - 2014-10-22 South India Yatra 2014 - Pure Bhakti is uncompromised %28Morning%29 - Radhanath Swami Hampi.mp3>
2. Hampi Yatra - Day 2 evening: Glorifies Sri Murari Gupta
URL: <http://radhanathswamiyatra.com/humpi-udupi-yatra-2014/radhanath-swami-glorifies-murari-gupta-2014-yatra-hampi-day-1-evening/>
Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47sl4yyyoY4>
Audio: <http://audio.iskcondesiretree.com/05 - ISKCON Chowpatty/96 - Yatra/2014 South India Yatra/02 - 2014-10-22 South India Yatra 2014 - The Bonafide most important practices of Bhakti Day 01 %28Evening%29 - Radhanath Swami.mp3>
3. Hampi Yatra - Day 2 morning: Story of Lord Rama allying with Sugriva
URL: <http://radhanathswamiyatra.com/humpi-udupi-yatra-2014/radhanath-swami-narrates-the-story-of-lord-ram-allying-with-sugriva/>
Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6aIFo11Tp4I>
Audio: <http://audio.iskcondesiretree.com/05 - ISKCON Chowpatty/96 - Yatra/2014 South India Yatra/03 - 2014-10-23 South India Yatra 2014 - Krishna is Light and Maya is Darkness Day 02%28Morning%29 - Radhanath Swami.mp3>
4. Hampi Yatra - Day 2 evening: Significance of Damodara Lila
URL: <http://radhanathswamiyatra.com/humpi-udupi-yatra-2014/radhanath-swami-on-the-significance-of-damodar-lila/>
Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGK3DHZvcPw>
5. Hampi Yatra - Day 3 morning: Hanuman's Finding Mother Sita
URL: <http://radhanathswamiyatra.com/humpi-udupi-yatra-2014/radhanath-swami-describes-hanumans-finding-mother-sita-2014-yatra-hampi-day-3-morning/>
Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-AHK67B8HGo>
6. Hampi Yatra - Day 3 evening: Lord Krishna lifting Govardhana Hill
URL: <http://radhanathswamiyatra.com/humpi-udupi-yatra-2014/3764/>
Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FUTztRrSlk>
7. Hampi Yatra - Day 4 evening: Story Mother Sita Reunites With Lord Rama
URL: <http://radhanathswamiyatra.com/humpi-udupi-yatra-2014/radhanath-swami-narrates-the-story-mother-sita-reunites-with-lord-ram/>
Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2c7OfFOtqU>

Sri Hampi Yatra Day 1 - morning: Birth of Hanuman

Srila Rupa Gosvami tells us in Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhu: one of the five most important practices of bhakti is to go to holy places for pilgrimage. It is said that if we go to a holy place to bathe in the holy rivers or see the spots without satsang, associating or hearing from holy people, then it is not really a pilgrimage at all. In Sri Caitanya Caritamrta it is said on many occasions that those people who carry Krishna, the Supreme Lord, within their heart, all the holy places are present there. So when we come to a holy place in the

association of devotees who are like-minded, who share the same essential purpose, and we come to hear about the Lord and His devotees, to chant the holy names in kirtan and japa, to offer our prayers, then it truly is a place of pilgrimage. Then Krishna reveals Himself to us in such an atmosphere.

Pure Devotional Service

In the path of bhakti we pray for pure devotional service - *anyabhilasa sunyam*. Srila Rupa Gosvami tells us that pure *bhakti* is uncompromised by the desire for liberation, by the desire for mystic powers, by the desire for heavenly pleasures. Pure devotional service is simply to awaken our love, with a will to serve with love. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu when describing bhakti to Srila Sanatana Gosvami built his most incredible teachings on the foundation of a single verse:

jiver swarup hoy krishner nitya-das

"We are all eternally the servants of Krishna."

nitya-siddha krsna-prema sadya kabu noy, sravanadi shuddha chitte koroya udoy

"Within the heart of every living being is love for Krishna, and by associating with Krishna's devotees, chanting Krishna's names, practicing the principles of devotional service, that love is awakened."

na dhanam na janam na sundarim

kavitam va jagad-isha kamaye

mama janmani janmanishvare

bhavatad bhaktir ahaituki twayi

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu taught us this prayer: *'I do not want the pleasures of this world: wealth, sexual pleasures, sensual pleasures. I do not want the prestige and fame of being great or learned or advance spiritually. I do not want the mystic powers that people spend lifetimes trying to achieve. I do not even want liberation from birth and death. My only prayer is to serve you unconditionally with love forever.'* That is the aspiration of those who follow the path of bhakti as it has been handed down by great acharyas from the very beginning of creation.

In the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Prahlada Maharaj tells there are nine processes within this bhakti path – *sravana, kirtana, smarana, vandana, pada-sevana, dasya, pujana, sakhijana, atma-nivedana* - beginning with hearing about the Lord and chanting his holy names and always remembering him. Each of these paths of *bhakti* is specially personified by a particular person.

mahajano yena gatah sa panthah

"The path of perfection is to follow in the footsteps of great souls."

Pariksit Maharaj attained perfection simply by hearing about Krishna, His various avatars and His teachings. Sukadeva Gosvami attained perfection simply by *kirtanam*, by chanting and describing the names and their glories; little Prahlada by always remembering Krishna in any and every situation. Kunti Devi, the great queen and the mother of the Pandavas, in the spirit of Prahlada, she prayed to Krishna, *"Let challenges and difficulties come upon me, because in that situation I am helpless and I have no one else to turn to. And I remember you with a whole heart, and in remembering you I am taken beyond danger and beyond fear."* Devotees of the Lord understand this principle that this material world has been created to facilitate every living being to ultimately attain his or her own spiritual perfection.

If it wasn't for time, in getting old and these three fold miseries - adhiatmika , adhibhautika , adhidaivika, miseries caused by our own body and mind, miseries caused by other people or other beings, miseries caused by natural disturbances – then we will be just complacent to just be happy in this world. But the eternal soul is sat-chit-ananda, it is eternal, full of knowledge and full of bliss. And the ananda, the bliss of the soul is to feel unlimited love of bhagvan, for Krishna, and to love Krishna. That exchange of love is the

only true happiness for the eternal soul. When we see the soul from the perspective of eternity, then the situations that come in this tiny little flash of lifetime can be seen in its proper perspective. Sometimes we see our troubles being so difficult. 'Why, why is this happening?' But when we see from the perspective of eternity we understand that whatever troubles are there, ultimately are there to help us to reconnect with our true essence, with Krishna.

Hanuman is the personification of seva. He perfected his life through selfless service to Sri Rama. It is seen that practically all the various spiritual paths of India unanimously have great honor for Hanumanji. Whether you go to Kashi or Vrindavana or any holy place, whether you go to any temple of any of the various (forms of the) Supreme Absolute Truth or the devas, Hanuman is always there to welcome us. Even the Jains and the Buddhists in various places worship Hanuman. His universal attraction is based on his incredible, unique, unconditional loving service to Sri Ramacandra and his compassion.

Viraha Bhava, love in separation, of Lord Ramacandra

When Sita was abducted and separated from Rama by Ravana, here in *Kishkinda Kshetra*, Sri Rama manifested His deep feelings of *Viraha bhav* or separation. We will all go to a place; in Ramayana it is called *Prashravana*. It is also known as *Maalyavanta*; there was a mountain close to where we sit, where there is a cave. After Rama made alliance with Sugriva, the monsoon rain started pouring down. That was pouring so hard, it was impossible to search for Sita at that time. So Rama, who was playing the role of human, He told Sugriva and his prime minister Hanuman, "After the monsoon we will search for Sita." But those four months Ramacandra and his brother Laxmana remained in that cave. Twenty four hours a day, day after day, week after week, month after month, Lord Sri Rama was totally immersed in separation from Sita. There is a *murti* of Sri Ramacandra sitting in a lotus posture with beads in his right hand, and his left hand touching his heart, because there throughout the day he was chanting the name of Sita and meditating upon her within his heart. Far away, in the distant land of Lanka, Ashok grove, Sita being harassed, tormented by Ravana and the *rakshasas* and *rakshashis*, was chanting Rama's name constantly, meditating on Rama within the core of her heart. In this way, the deepest union of love was manifested in their separation for each other. When Krishna left Vrindavana to Mathura and later to Dwarka, in *Brihad Bhagavatamrita* by Sanatana Gosvami it is explained how the *gopis* and *gopas*, they lived twenty four hours a day only breathing with the expectation that Krishna would return that day. The *gopis* cried for the rest of their lives in separation from Krishna, and they would make garlands for Him, make wonderful arrangements in every way, and cook His favorite food expecting Him to return that day.

In Caitanya Caritamrta - during the Jagannatha Rathayatra - it is explained, Lord Caitanya's mood of Srimati Radharani in separation from Krishna and Krishna's mood in separation from Brijwasis. Krishna revealed that all day, every day. He was simply remembering the residents of Vrindavana and the residents of Vrindavana were always immersed in remembering Him. Sanatana Gosvami reveals Krishna's mind. The depth of their love in separation is so deep - the union of their hearts - that it is the highest revelation of prema. In a similar way Rama and Sita were experiencing that Viraha Bhav. And Kishkinda Kshetra, where we sit today, very much personifies that revelation. It is here that Rama cried for four months in separation from Sita, the ultimate beloved.

The *jiva*, every living being, who is part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, has, as its deepest potential and its very essence, love for Krishna, love for Rama. That love, that *prema*, is the energy, part and parcel of Sri Radha's or Sri Sita's love. But due to the ego, the *ahankara* - the misconception that 'I am this body and all of its designations and whatever is in relationship to this body is mine' - we have forgotten that love. We are constantly being distracted by those things that perpetuate this material conception of life.

Bhakti is the process of reconnecting us to our true nature, and in doing so, reconnecting in our relationship with the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. In this sense, Sita represents love of Krishna, love of Rama, the *jiva's* (the soul's) love for God. Rama is the Paramatma; Ravana is the *ahankara*. Ravana is that power that separates our love for the Supreme. Bhakti is what reconnects us with the Supreme.

Hanuman's unique position

It was Hanuman that delivered the message to Sita after discovering her, then delivered Sita's message back to Rama. It was Hanuman who was prominent in building the bridge across the ocean to reconnect Rama and Sita. It was Hanumanji who was the most instrumental person to fight the battle against the Rakshasas and assist Rama in overcoming Ravana. And it was Hanuman who was sent by Rama after the great war of Lanka to bring Sita back to be reunited with Him. Hanuman, all of the incredible pastimes that he performed, he never took credit for anything. He was constantly chanting the holy names of the Lord and he gave all credit to Lord's grace, who was always present within the holy names.

*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare*

This chanting of Krishna's names, Rama's names wakes us up, because in this age of kali people are so soundly sleeping. The loud chanting of the holy name is required.

Histories of Hampi

The place where we are sitting is very ancient holy place. There are many, many histories to explain. I will speak just a few.

Hampi - the place where Siva and Parvati performed *tapasya* and were reunited

We read in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and other *puranas* about Daksha *yajna*. Daksha, he was such an extraordinary person. His physical beauty was incomparable. His knowledge of scriptures and of every other science and subject matter was incredible. He had such power, such fame. When he came to an assembly, the rishis, the sages and even the devas would stand up to greet him. But despite having all these qualities, he had a great disqualification, which is the basic *anartha* or unwanted quality that separates everyone from the Supreme, from Krishna, and that is *ahankara* or ego. As soon as we think anything we have is our own, we fall into illusion.

prakrite kriyamanani gunaih karmani sarvasah ahankara...

Lord Krishna tells in Bhagavad-Gita: bewildered souls think themselves to be the doers of their activities, but actually everything we have is a gift. To have a grateful heart is to be humble and acknowledge the power of the persons who are giving us these gifts. Without air, we cannot breathe, we cannot digest our food, we cannot live for more than a few minutes. Vayu is the lord of the air. On behalf of Supreme, Bhagvan, he is providing. Where there is ego, the natural evolution it creates is envy - we want to be great, we want to be proprietor, we want to be enjoyer.

Daksha, who had so much, was envious of his own son-in-law Siva. And due to that envy he said so many terrible things against Siva. It's a beautiful and incredible story, but eventually his own wife Sati ended her life because she could not tolerate it.

She took her next birth; one of her names was Pampa devi. She came to this place to perform *tapasya* to get Siva as her husband, and Siva also was here doing *tapasya* to once again get Sati as his wife. While he was engrossed in *tapasya* in deep, deep meditation, the *asuras* were attacking the devas. So the devas wanted to wake up Siva, because they needed a son from him to be their general. But Siva was in such deep Samadhi that nothing could wake him. So the devas appointed Kamadeva, who is the predominating personality, the power over the desire to enjoy - *kama*. So he came and created such an

unbelievable environment. It was right here, where we are close to, and he created the most pleasing season, weather. There were flowers with magnificent fragrances blooming. Everything was just so nice, and he created amazing *apsaras* and dancing ladies, singing with celestial voices and dancing around Lord Siva, as he sat in meditation; nothing fazed him. Every single material power that Kamadeva had, he used, and Siva was not to be disturbed. So finally he took his own arrow with all his potencies and directed it towards Shankar. Lord Siva opened his eyes, and when he saw Kamadeva there, he opened the third eye. Kamadeva was burnt to ashes. The place where that happened is Manmat, it is a *kunda*, very close to here. It represents *param drishtva nivartate*.

If we want to overcome desires, distractions that are so powerful and beyond us... *daivi hy esa guna-mayi mama maya duratyaya*

Lord Krishna tells in *Bhagavad-Gita*: this material nature consisting of goodness, passion and ignorance - *rajaguna* , *tamoguna*, *satvaguna* - is very difficult to overcome, but one who takes shelter of me and experiences the higher taste, the higher experience of my grace, only then can we overcome the challenges and distraction of material life. The devas explained the reasons, and Siva in this place, he pardoned Kamadeva and gave him a body without a body, *ananga*, and then he came together with Pampa devi, whose another name is Parvati. So in Virupaksha Temple we find the *murti* of Pampadevi and the *murti* of Lord Siva. It is here that they performed *tapasya* to reunite with each other. It was here that they were reunited.

Hampi - the capital of the Vijayanagar Empire

Hampi is famous throughout the world for many reasons. Many people come here, some because it is one of the most beautiful, natural places of scenery where there are rivers and mountains and rock formations. Others come here because some of the most important historical ancient ruins are here. Around the year 1336 Vijayanagar Empire was established. At that time the Mughals were conquering all of North India and conquering so much of South India. And there were various South Indian Hindu kingdoms that were fighting, and ultimately they were losing. So the kings came together as one kingdom, Vijayanagar.

Srila Prabhupada gave example that when we are united we can stand together to overcome great challenges. Maya is extremely strong. Srila Prabhupada gave example that if you take little sticks and bind them together, then the unity is their strength; it cannot be broken. And if you take a stick out, it can easily be broken. So when we are united for that common higher purpose of devotional service, it gives us great strength. So cooperation, respect for each other, is not just a cultural expression, but it's actually a need for our spiritual survival.

So these various kingdoms were brought together by the kings of Vijayanagar and ultimately they ruled over practically the whole of South India for about 250 years. All the various religions and all the various cultures lived happily together here. The great architectural achievements over two centuries were quiet destroyed when they were destroyed, but the ruins have become one of the very archaeologically most attractive places in the world. So you see some of these places, but that's not why we came here.

Hampi as the birthplace of Hanumanji

So many great *acaryas* came here - not to see archaeological ruins. *Ramanujacarya came here, Sankaracharya came here, Vallabhacharya came here, Madhavacharya, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu. It is described in our great histories: they all came to receive blessings of this place and to teach us the importance of coming to these places on pilgrimage.*

In Ramayana this is Kishkinda Kshetra. It is specially a place where people come - and we have come - to offer our prayers to Sri Hanuman. Sri Ramacandra appears in this world in Treta Yuga - in various kalpas - and Hanuman, His eternal servant, comes with Him. So in the different *Puranas* it is described, different ways in which Sri Hanumanji took his birth within this world. I would like to speak just a few of them.

Story of Hanuman's birth from Ananda Ramayana

In the *Ananda Ramayana*, it explains how Bhumi Devi and the various devas approached Brahma because Ravana and his associates were terrorizing the world. And Lord Vishnu was worshipped by them, and he promised to appear. He told the demigods, the devas, to appear within Vaanara community, amongst celestial monkeys, and how he would appear as the son of Dasratha and Kausalya. King Dasratha was the emperor of the Kaushal dynasty whose capital was Ayodhya. Valmiki explains in his Ramayana that Ayodhya was full of all prosperity. Everyone treated each other with love and respect. There was no poverty. There was no hunger. There was no thirst. There was no suffering. Everything was just so nice. Dasratha, although having everything and being incredibly so popular, loved and successful, could not find any true happiness because he wanted a son. (So that) When he retired to dedicate his entirety of life to the service of the Supreme Lord, he could entrust the responsibilities of the kingdom to his son. Years passed and ultimately he performed, on the instruction of Vasishta Muni - a special yajna. The head priest was Rishia Sringa. The culmination of that *yajna* was a chanting of a mantra, an oblation. From that oblation in the sacred fire, a divine personality emerged. He was holding a golden pot of celestial payasam or nectar. He gave that to Dasratha and told him to share it amongst his three wives - Kaushalya, Kaikayi and Sumitra. We know from Ramayana, after three of them drank that payasam, they became pregnant. Rama, Laxmana, Bharat and Satrugna were to be born.

As that divine person gave a portion to Sumitra, Vayu appeared. Vayu is the lord of air, the lord of the wind. He came in the form of a huge bird. He came down and took a portion of that payasam and flew into the air to here. And there Anjana, the wife of Kesari, she had worshipped Lord Siva for a son, and Lord Siva appeared to her and told her, "You perform tapasya and hold your palms up." Vayu put the payasam in Anjana's hands and she drank it and became pregnant. After sometime, Hanuman was born.

Story of Hanuman's birth from Siva Purana

In the *Siva Purana*, there is another story. We read in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* also of how the devas and the *asuras* churned the ocean of milk for the purpose of getting nectar, amrit. Dhanvantri appeared at the very conclusion of this incredible pastime with this pot of nectar. Demigods and the demons were fighting over it, and ultimately demons snatched it. Devas were in a completely helpless state. So they prayed to Lord Vishnu, and Lord Vishnu appeared as the most beautiful woman anyone could imagine. Her name was Mohini. She went right before the demons, the asuras, and glanced at them. Each of them was thinking that 'she loves me and she spoke so sweetly and each of them surrendered to her because they thought 'she loves only me' and they said... You know, there was a dispute. What happened is, after the asuras took all the nectar, they were fighting over who is to take it first. They would not let any of each other take it. Even if they were going to share it, each of them thought, "I should have the honor of having it first." So as the asuras were fighting over it, the demigods were sitting there completely bereft and Mohini appeared and all the demons they said, "Mohini, you take this full pot of this nectar and you distribute it as you want." And each one of them was convinced that 'she is going to give it to me only.' Such was her beauty. She took it and gave it all to the demigods.

So Lord Siva met Lord Vishnu and he said, "I have heard about this Mohini Murthi. I want to see this form." Lord Vishnu said, "I don't think you want to see this form." "No! No! I want to see this form."

So then Lord Vishnu said, "All right," and he left. Lord Siva was sitting and suddenly Mohini Murthi appeared. She was playing with a ball and she was so beautiful. Lord Siva was so attracted to her. He started running to catch her and she was running away. But she was running in such a way that she didn't even seem to be running. She would just glance at him and then look somewhere else and glance at him.

Parvati was sitting next to Siva, and he left Parvati. Mohini, she ran to these hermitages where Siva's devotees, all sadhus and babas, were performing severe austerities. They were *brahmacharis*, they were sanyasis, they were doing all this to worship Siva. They were all chanting his names and performing yagnas. Suddenly the most beautiful woman comes running right through their hermitage, and they looked down and turned their heads away, because they did not want to displease Lord Siva by looking at her. But then the next thing that happened is that they saw Lord Siva, and he was running after her and they didn't know what to do. Then ultimately she came to a special place and she allowed Lord Siva to touch her, and then she disappeared. When he touched her, his potency, his seed came out from his body. The power of Lord Siva was there.

Lord Siva's own identity was in that seed and that was entrusted to the Saptarishis, the seven great sages. Lord Siva explains to them, "You should take this and give it to Vayu." Lord Vayu, he took that seed and brought it to Anjana. Lord Siva's potency and identity was in that seed and Vayu, he invested his own personality and his own potencies within that seed, and Vayu as the wind placed it within Anjana, through her ear – different explanations – and Hanuman was born.

It is explained that when Ravana was conquering the world and creating so much cry - Ravana means the one who makes people cry - the demigods appealed to Vishnu. Ravana, so many of his powers he got from the benedictions of Brahma, and also benedictions of Siva. At Gokarna Ravana performed severe tapasya and Lord Siva gave him so many benedictions. So Lord Vishnu did not want to kill a devotee of Siva, and Siva did not want to kill his own devotee. But Ravana after getting these powers became so arrogant. He thought he could do anything. He was committing so many offences. It was decided he must be killed.

So Lord Siva, he told Vishnu and devas, "He is My devotee and I manifested Myself as eleven rudras. In his tapasya he cut ten of his heads to pacify me and get my favor, but not an eleventh. So I will manifest myself, expand Myself as the eleventh rudra, Sri Hanumanji and assist you to liberate the world from Ravana.

So one day Siva was immersed in great emotion in chanting the names of Rama. Parvati asked, "Why are you doing like this?" Lord Siva told Parvati Devi, "The name of Rama is the complete presence of the absolute truth. The Supreme Lord of all creations is within the name and that same Rama is going to appear within the world to satisfy the devas by liberating Ravana. I want to come; I am going to incarnate in the world to serve Rama, my beloved eternal master in the form of a monkey." She said, "Why do you want to come in the form of monkey? He said, "Because monkeys are completely detached, they have no caste, they can do anything. Nothing will obstruct my service to Rama in this form. Actually I will become Hanuman. Hanuman is ansha, a plenary portion of me." Then Parvati said, "I want to come with you. I want to assist you. I will come as your tail, because just like I am your ornament as your wife, the tail is the ornament of monkey; most beautiful tail, which will be full of all of your potencies." So Lord Siva agreed.

Story of Hanuman's birth from Valmiki Ramayana

It is described in the Valmiki Ramayana that in the heavenly world there was an *apsara* named Punjikastala. When she was a young child, Brahaspathi the guru for all demigods

brought her to his own ashram and accepted her as his own daughter. In the forest hermitage where they lived, it was the abode of peace where all of these great sages and rishis who were living with Brahaspathi, the topmost of all Brahmins, were absorbed in puja, yajna, meditation and chanting the holy names of the Lord. Punjikastala was brought up from her early childhood in that environment. She did not know anything about material desires because they just didn't exist there. When she was about seventeen years old, she was collecting fragrant flowers to bring back to Brahaspathi, her guru who was like her own father. She came out of the boundaries of the ashram unknowingly, and there she wandered to a place where some Gandharvas, very heavenly people, they were taking their baths and they were enjoying in so many materialistic ways. She became attracted. Brahaspathi was waiting for her and waiting for her. Finally he came out, saw her and understood the situation. He told her, "Because you still have these material desires and you want to enjoy independently, let you be free from these desires. You will be born in earth in the family of monkeys."

She became very sober after hearing this. Punjikastala fell at the feet of Brahaspati and begged, "Why are you giving me this curse?" He said, "This is not a curse; it's a blessing. There is a purpose behind it. Vayu and Siva will incarnate as your son Hanuman. He will be the greatest of the devotees, the very symbol of bhakti. After you give birth to him, then you can return here, completely liberated and free." So Punjikastala took birth as the daughter of Kundala who was the chief of the vanaras of the monkey tribe, and her name was Anjana. Anjana had such divine qualities. When she was young, she just wanted to love God and she had this innate desire for a child also, which was the will of the Lord. She went into the forest just to be undisturbed in her devotion. At that time, there was a rakshasa Sambasadhana. He saw her and he fell in love with her; he wanted to enjoy her. She ran away, but he chased after her. Eventually she ran to a place of great sages and Rishis in a hermitage, and expressed her condition. They said, "This Sambasadhana is such a powerful Rakshasa, such an Asura, that he is constantly harassing us and there is nothing we could do about it. But there is one great vanara, a monkey warrior named Kesari, and he is the one who can slay him."

Sambasadhana, he attacked the hermitage, started destroying everything that the sages were doing, and went to abduct Anjana. She prayed to Lord Siva to save her. At that time Kesari, he appeared and he challenged Sambasadhana. It was an incredible fight. They were battling one another. Sambasadhana, by his mystic powers became a gigantic elephant and he was destroying everything in sight. Kesari, there was nothing he could do to stop him. So ultimately he took a small form and jumped right on the forehead, which is the weakest part of the elephant, and started beating on him, beating on him. He was so small, but his fist was very strong. Elephant could not do anything because he could not reach him. Eventually he had to give up the form of an elephant to become the Rakshasa again. They were fighting and fighting and fighting and neither one could defeat the other. Meanwhile Anjana was praying to Siva and Siva appeared to her and said, "The only way by which this Rakshasa could be killed is by his own blood."

So she used her imagination and she saw some of his blood that was spilled, and she took an arrow and covered it with that blood. She gave it to Kesari and said, "Shoot this into the Rakshasa!" And the Rakshasa died. So all the rishis and sages were coming to Kesari and congratulating him. He said, "It's actually Anjana. She is the one who taught me how to do it. Otherwise, I could not have done it." So they were expressing their gratitude and the sages requested Anjana and Kesari to marry. So they married and many years passed. Although they both wanted a child – that was an innate desire that God had put in their heart – no child was born. So they prayed and they both did tapasya for years and years.

At one time Lord Siva and Parvati, they took the form of a male and female monkey and Kesari wanted to chase them away. But Anjana said, "No! No! No! That is Siva and Parvati,

I know." And after honoring them, they heard a voice - this is another story - and they were blessed. Ultimately, the seed that was given... In this particular story, Siva tells, "In the forest there is an incredible mango tree and a particular mango from that tree will give you a child that you pray for." So they went into the forest and found this mango tree, performed prayers and tapasya and worship, and after seven days a divine personality appeared from the tree with a beautiful effulgent mango. He said, "I am Vayu. Within this mango is the potency of Siva and I have put my own potency in this." He gave it to Kesari to give it to Anjana. Kesari put all of his potencies in that mango and Anjana ate it and became pregnant with a child.

It was here at Anjana Parvat that Anjana gave birth to Hanuman. He is the son of Vayu. He is the son of Siva. He is the son of Kesari. And he is the son of Anjana, Anjaneya.

Hanumanji's childhood

It is described that while he was in the womb of his mother, Bali was the king of the *vanaras*, unrivalled. He had heard that the child within Anjana's womb is going to be extremely powerful. So he was unsecured thinking, "If he is so extremely powerful, he may conquer me." So he took a particular weapon, a subtle weapon made out of five metals - gold, silver, copper, tin, iron - and he sent that weapon into the womb of Anjana to kill the baby. But because he had the power of Siva and Vayu, the weapon melted and formed into the gold earrings that Hanuman put on his ears.

So when Hanuman was born, he had these beautiful earrings. But nobody could see them, because they were divine. He was also born with crown and with jewels and with saffron cloth covering himself. When he was a little baby, just an infant baby, he was so beautiful. Anjana did not want to go to the heavenly world because she had this most wonderful son. So she remained as his mother. She was so proud.

Hanuman trying to eat the sun

One day little Hanuman, very small child - famous story - he was hungry. And his mother was not present at that time. The sun was rising and he saw the sun to be a piece of fruit. So he jumped to eat the fruit. Little baby Hanuman was jumping, and he was soaring through the air and going to outer space towards the sun. When he was just about to approach the sun, Surya who was the sun himself, he understood the greatness of Hanuman. So he was recognizing that, and Vayu, the father of Hanuman, was protecting little Hanuman with air to make sure that Hanuman didn't get burnt by the rays of the sun. Just like, some of you are sitting in the sun and you probably will get sunburn even though sun is so many millions of miles away. Hanuman was right next to the sun, but because of Vayu's grace he was not getting burnt.

But that particular day happened to be the schedule for an eclipse; Rahu was about to get the sun. Hanuman saw Rahu. So Hanuman chased after Rahu. Just kind of threw him away. Rahu was so disturbed; he went to Indira and said, "This is my appointed time; you have to protect me." So Indra got on Airavata, his elephant carrier, and charged along with Rahu. Little baby Hanuman saw Airavata, massive elephant, and he wanted to play with him. So he jumped towards Airavata, grabbed him by the trunk and then jumped on his back to ride on him. Here Indra sitting on Airavata and little baby Hanuman was behind him! So Indra understood, "I have to do something about this child." And Vayu said, "No, he is my child. Don't do anything." So Indra sent his vajra, his thunderbolt, to hit the chin of this little baby child Anjaneya. The baby fell unconscious.

Vayu saw that he is hardly breathing. So Vayu took the little baby in his arms and brought him to a cave. But in order to teach devas a good lesson he exerted his own powers. He had a higher purpose in mind - ultimately to bless his son. Vayu is the in-charge of the wind, the air. Nothing can survive without air. He withdrew all the air of the universe. Certainly all humans, all insects, all birds, all fish, all reptiles, and all the demigods they

were suffocating. Not only do we breathe air, but we can't move without air. Just like our joints, if there is no air within our joints we can't move our arms, our fingers or even our eyes. So everything became paralyzed. And not only that, but without air you can't digest food. Neither you can digest it, nor can you remove it. So everyone became constipated. Everyone got incredible indigestion. Nobody could move and nobody could breath – power of vayu. Where does he get his powers from? from Vishnu, from Krishna, the Supreme. So all the devas on the verge of death and all the rishis and the sages they approached Brahma, and Brahma said, "What do you expect? You caused harm to the son of Vayu." So all the devas went to Vayu in the cave and Brahma touched the little child; for the first time little boy opened his eyes and he was fine. They all offered to give benedictions to the child. Now his name became Hanuman, which means 'one who is injured in his chin.'

Indira offered the benediction in order to atone for their offence to this little boy and to please Vayu. *All the great devas were giving their choicest benedictions to this child, but ultimately it was because the child was the greatest of devotees, so that he could use all these benedictions in the loving service of Sri Rama.* Indra promised, "Every one of your limbs will be stronger than my thunderbolt, my vajra, and nothing could harm you." Agni gave the benediction, "Fire could never cause you any pain or harm." Surya, lord of the sun, offered the benediction, "One hundredth of my effulgence you will have, and when you will come of age, I will be your guru and teach you all knowledge of all subjects." Lord Brhama gave the benediction, "Nothing could kill you and no one could kill you. You will live as long as I live." Mahavishnu gave the benediction, "You will be greatest of all great devotees." Kala gave him the benediction, "Even time will not be able to overcome you." So this little baby had so many benedictions.

Sages bless Hanuman with a curse

Then all the devas, they left. Vayu entrusted little Hanuman again to Anjana and Kesari and explained about all the benedictions that was given to him. Hanuman was aware of all of them, so he became very mischievous, as a little child. Who could do anything to him?! All the demigods gave all their greatest powers to him. So sometimes near the banks of the rivers, and in the holy forests, sages would be performing their tapasya, their worship. Hanuman would come; he would jump on their backs. He would go in the river when they would be bathing and he would spit on them with the river waters. Sometimes they would wear tree barks and they would hang it up after washing and he would tear it in shreds. Other time he would jump on their scriptures. He was always causing innocent, but nice disturbances to them. So they reported to Kesari and Anjana, and they said, "There is nothing we can do about it, because he has all these benedictions. he doesn't listen to us."

So they all came together to make a plan and the plan was, sages were going to bless him with a curse, by Lord's will, that he will forget all his benedictions and think himself ordinary – unless someone reminded him. So then he became such a well- mannered and helpful. He was carrying the waters for the sages, helping to wash their clothes, dry them and doing everything nice, and none of them ever reminded Hanuman. For many years nobody reminded him. So we will continue our story tomorrow. Sri Hanumanji ki Jai!

Srila Prabhupada's accomplishments to that of Hanuman:

I would like to end with one small thought. In the coming narrations we will hear about Hanuman meeting with Rama and the incredible services he rendered to Rama. In order to bring Sita back to Rama he crossed over oceans. Hanuman represents pure devotional service, bhakti. Our beloved Srila Prabhupada, our guru, in order to bring the souls back to the lotus feet of Krishna or Rama, to restore that pure devotion, he also crossed many oceans. This is the principle of bhakti. It is expressed through compassion. Hanuman was the very embodiment of compassion to all beings. Our Guru Maharaj Srila Prabhupada, he represented that same compassion to all beings. To the body and the mind and ultimately the soul, the highest compassion is to reunite the souls of others with the supreme soul.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he took the very essence of all Vedic knowledge: *Harer Nama Harer Nama Harer Namaiva Kevalam*. In this age of kali one can restore that love that is within our heart and reconnect us to the Supreme Personality of Godhead through the chanting of the holy names. Hanumanji, he was the personification of constant chanting of the holy name. Srila Prabhupada crossed oceans. When he came to the western world - kind of like Hanuman when he was in Lanka - he said, "I knew that I have the blessing for my guru and I have the holy names of Sri Krishna." So he had no fear.

So we have come here to this very holy place to revive that love within our own hearts, and to pray for the power to revive that love within the hearts of others.

Paro upkar – the greatest compassion is to awaken that love for God within the hearts of others, to give people the understanding of their own true identity beyond birth, beyond death and beyond all suffering, and to give people the experience of the highest happiness, the happiness that is beyond all the inebrieties of this material existence, the taste of Krishna's love. And for that reason we have come: to offer prayers, to serve one another. While on this pilgrimage, we should perform some *tapasya*. If there are any inconveniences, take them as blessings. Trying to move around with over four thousand and five hundred people could be an inconvenience, but it's a blessing. Some inconveniences... that so many people could share the same opportunity as us should bring us joy. While here on this pilgrimage let us not discuss any gossip or mundane subjects. Let us really immerse ourselves in a prayerful mood, praying for pure devotion, eager to serve one another. *samsidhir hari tosanam*

Lord Hari is especially pleased when we become the servants of the servants of his servants. So let us really try to live in that Vaikuntha consciousness. Actually we should be like this for our whole life, but we can especially focus on it when we are here on pilgrimage, because we don't have anything else to do. When we go home, we have so many duties and so many distractions. But here we have the opportunity to completely absorb ourselves. That's why we come, absorb ourselves in chanting Krishna's names, Rama's names, absorb ourselves in prayers, in *seva*.

Sri Hampi Yatra Day 1 - evening: Glories of Sri Murari Gupta

About 500 years ago, Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu came to this place. In the pages of Sri Caitanya Caritamrta we read of how Lord Caitanya took His bath in Pampa Sarovar and visited the holy places here.

Gratitude that the Lord feels for his devotees

In the pastimes of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, like in the pastimes of Lord Rama and Krishna, he especially revealed the glorious devotion of his devotees. As Rama, here in Kishkinda Kshetra, he embraced Hanumanji.

Lord Ramacandra confessed to Hanumanji, "The love and the sacrifice you have offered in my service is so overwhelming to Me that I have no power to repay you. All I can give you is My embrace." He embraced Hanuman, and in doing so He gave Himself. For Hanumanji, there was nothing that he wanted in all creation except to give happiness to his beloved Lord Sri Rama. And knowing Rama's love for Sita, his ultimate and only goal in life was to give happiness to Sita.

In fact, Hanuman lives forever to give protection, inspiration and empowerment wherever devotees sincerely chant the Lord's holy names, because he knows there is nothing that gives pleasure to the Lord greater than being the servant of the servant of the servants; that is what he lived for.

Similarly, when the gopis made such great sacrifice and took such risk to meet Krishna on Sharad Poornima, Krishna honestly revealed his heart to them. "I have no power to repay you for your love, even in the entire lifetime of Brahma, with all that I have." Krishna is the proprietor of everything that exists in all spiritual and material worlds! "I have no power to repay you for your love." This is the nature of Krishna. It is the nature of the God.

Gratitude is one of the most essential virtues for spiritual progress. A grateful heart is a fertile field for the seed of devotion to grow. The origin of that gratitude is the reciprocation of Krishna for the love of devotee and the devotee's love for Krishna.

tat te nu kampam susumiksa ma.....

In *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Lord Brahma tells us - and it was a verse that was often quoted by Srila Prabhupada as a foundational teaching to our spiritual progress - that even when troubles and difficulties come, even when they seem by worldly estimation to be very unfair - we may have to deal with it according to the necessity - but in our hearts we bow down to Krishna with gratitude. "This is an opportunity for me to take shelter even in the hardest times."

Sri Hampi Yatra Day 2 - morning: Story of Lord Rama allying with Sugriva

I am very grateful to be among all of you in this ancient holy place where Lord Sri Ramacandra spent intimate months meditating on the supreme source of all love, His pleasure potency Sita.

Hanuman receives education from Surya

Hanuman was given benedictions by the most powerful deputed agents of the Supreme Lord within the universe. One of those benedictions was when he came to the age to study, Surya, the predominating Lord of the Sun planet would teach him all of the Vedas, all of the sciences and all the subjects necessary to empower him in his devotional service.

In the *Gayatri Mantra* that Brahmans chant three times during the sandhya every day, there is a meditation upon and worship of Suryanarayan, Krishna who was the very source and power of the sun.

Krishna surya sam, maya hoy andhakar

Krishna is like light and maya is darkness. In the presence of Krishna darkness cannot exist. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna compares ignorance to darkness and transcendental knowledge to light. When we understand who we really are, the eternal soul, we understand *jiva tattva* and *Krishna tattva*, the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, the source of everything that exists, and our relationship, Bhakti Tattva, that we are the eternal servants of the Lord. To love Krishna, to serve Krishna according to Krishna's will is the true dharma of the soul, it is *Sanatana Dharma*. And this *maya tattva* or the truths about illusory energy and the prakriti or material nature, when that light of this knowledge is revealed to us than we can see everything as it is.

Srila Prabhupada sometimes defined maya as 'that which is not.' In other words, when we forget our own relationship with Krishna, then our conception of our self, our conception of everything within this world, our conceptions of all our relationships with others are not actually as it is. When we think 'I am the controller, I am the proprietor, I am the enjoyer,' nothing we see, nothing we experience through our mind or senses is real. It's not true. The reality is Krishna is the Supreme proprietor, the Supreme controller and ultimately everything is meant for Krishna's enjoyment. We are eternal loving servants. When the root of a tree is watered, every part of the tree is satisfied, but if we neglect the root, no matter what creative, scientific technological efforts we make, every part of the tree will suffer in course of time.

Within this universe the source of all light is the sun, directly or indirectly. Fire, electricity, its origin is all in the power and the energy of the sun and that sun planet is literally creating light for everyone and everywhere. Without it there could be no life. So Surya the source of that light is gaining all of the potencies and powers from Narayan, the Supreme Lord who is within Surya's heart. Hanumanji, the son of the wind god who is the source of all air, went to Surya and appealed to him to teach him all knowledge. Surya told Hanumanji that, "Like you I am also very much engaged in the service of the Lord." Surya's service is to bring light to the universe on his chariot. So Hanumanji agreed that he would fly backwards as Surya was riding forward, hearing his teachings. In this way Hanumaji learnt the knowledge of the Vedas and so many branches in sciences of essential knowledge directly from Surya, and he was empowered to remember everything he learnt. At the end of his education Hanuman wanted to give *dakshina* or a contribution of gratitude to his guru. Surya was so pleased with Hanumanji, he said, "*I can ask nothing of you. Just your enthusiasm and determination to learn has completely satisfied my heart.*"

How the great souls find happiness in compassion

This is such an essential universal principle because great personalities, they are entrusted with knowledge they do not claim to be their own. Ultimately Krishna is the source of all knowledge, He is the Adi Guru, the original guru, and when we are entrusted with that knowledge and we actually have some understanding of it and taste the sweetness and the happiness that comes from that knowledge, then we become atmarama, we become completely satisfied. There is nothing we need of this modern world. Our greatest happiness is just to share it with others. Bhaktivinoda Thakura has explained that the symptom of one who truly loves Krishna is they have a selfless spirit of compassion to all living beings. Krishna tells in Gita, '*When you have thus known the truth, you will know that all living beings are in me and are mine.*'

mamaivamso jiva-loke jiva-bhutah sanatanah

We see that everyone is a part of Krishna.

aham bija pradah pita

He is the supreme mother and father of everyone.

In the light of truth we see our relationships with everything in this world. It is all Krishna's energy meant for Krishna's service, and we see every living being as Krishna's child loved by him, deserving of our compassion. So the greatest joy for an enlightened lover of God is to share that love with others.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in the role of a devotee, when He was in Varanasi, He compared Himself to a fruit vendor. He said, "*I have come with the fruits of prema bhakti and I have so many fruits, unlimited fruits. How many can I give with My own hands? Therefore anyone or everyone who is My devotee, if you want to please Me and satisfy Me, assist Me in distributing these fruits of love of God, Krishna prema. Little Prahlada, He told when offered any benediction from Lord Nrsimhadeva. There are certain types of yogis and philosophers who want to be in a secluded place in the Himalayan jungle to seek their own liberation but Prahlada by the grace of his guru Narada muni felt gratitude. Here was Prahlada, he was born as a son of Hiranyakasipu in a family of daityas and yet by the grace Narada muni he was given entrance into pure loving devotional service. His gratitude, "What Narada Muni has given Me, I want to give to others. As long as there is anyone in this world let Me be there to help them to understand you."*

People in this world who have riches, who have beauty, fame, strengths, health but do not have pure bhakti, they are the objects of compassion for those who do. Why should we spend this valuable rare human life chasing after things that are going to be stripped away from us very soon? *dukhalayam asasvatam*

The human birth is the opportunity to find the true pleasure, the real wealth of eternal happiness and to share that happiness with others. This is the nature of a person who has seen the light. He becomes humble by that light, there is no question of false ego. Selfishness, the incessant craving to be recognized, pratishtā, the desire for recognition, fame - it's the mind's way of succumbing to the ego. It's the symptom of the person who has really not tasted the sweetness of glorifying Krishna, who is all attractive, who is Bhagvan. Krishna is the Supreme whole and the origin of all knowledge, strength, wealth, fame, beauty and renunciation. When we experience Krishna's all attractive qualities, it awakens our love and that love is the total satisfaction of the enlightened souls. So there is no need to try to prove myself to anyone, at anytime.

'Being the servant of the servant'

Hanumanji asked for the same benediction. "As long as creation is here, as long as Your name is being chanted and Your glories are being discussed Lord Rama, let Me be here to serve those people." Hanuman himself, it's quite extraordinary, we find in Ramayana, he was really in the spirit of being the servant of the servant. Even when he went to Lanka, he didn't get that order directly from Rama. He got it from Sugriva, and when he jumped across the ocean he got the instruction from Jambavana. Almost all of the great great things that he did, he did under the orders of servants of Rama. He was the dear-most and closest to Rama but still he was eager to be the servant of the servants.

In our own *sampradaya*, the most elevated of the acharyas, the Prayojana Acharya Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, he was so close to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu but yet all instructions that he was receiving was through Swarupa Damodar Gosvami. How the greatest personalities want to be the servant of the servant of the servant and how the lowest and the smallest personalities want to be the master. Knowledge brings this light to our life where we understand what is of true value and what isn't.

The mood of a speaker of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*

So to great personalities, they are most happy by seeing our enthusiasm to make spiritual progress. *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, what was it that Sukadeva Gosvami wanted? He didn't even wear clothes, he never lived in a house his whole life, he just wandered the forest completely immersed in hearing and chanting and remembering the glories of the Lord. When he was speaking on the bank of Ganga to Parikshit Maharaj, again and again he would speak from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* especially from the 10th canto. He glorifies Parikshit, because he was so enthusiastic to hear. 'Your enthusiasm to hear is empowering me to speak.' When we actually understand that we are instruments of grace, not holder of grace but instruments of grace, nothing is ours, but the opportunity to serve. When people are eager to hear instead of being proud that we can speak nicely, we actually are grateful.

'Because of your eagerness, Krishna so much attracted to eagerness that he is speaking even through me.' This is the mood of Sukadeva Gosvami, this is the mood of a preacher of pure *bhakti*. Not that 'I am the knower,' but 'when people are eager to hear, devotees are eager to hear, Krishna wants that message so much to come to you that he is even willing to speak through me.'

So Surya was so happy because Hanuman was so eager to learn. He said, "That has completed made me satisfied." Hanuman insisted he wanted to give him something more. Surya, he said, "My son, who is an expansion of myself, is Sugriva, the son of Vriksharaj and the brother of Bali. Be his friend, be his protector. In every situation in life be at his side." Hanumanji made that promise.

Srila Prabhupada explained what is actual gratitude and love. When we take initiation, when we take vows, our actual love for Krishna, for our guru, for previous acharyas is shown in our gratitude that whatever situation may come upon us we remain faithful to

that vow, because true love becomes pure and pure when it is tested by circumstances. And that is why Krishna allows so many challenges to come in our lives. They are opportunities to grow, opportunities to go deep and to understand what true gratitude actually is, and to express it through our words and choices we make in our life moment after moment.

So Sri Hanumanji came to Kishkinda Kshetra and there he became the dear friend and minister of Sugriva.

Meeting of Lord Rama and Hanuman

Meanwhile, Lord Ramacandra was travelling. From the Ramayana we learn he was exiled from Ayodhya along with Sita and Laxmana; he lived very happily in Chitrakuta. Bharat came, begged him to take the throne of kingdom, but Ramacandra in the act of true gratitude to his father and to show the world highest principle of true dharma, detachment...

True gratitude can only come when there is detachment. It is such a sacred principle. Srila Rupa Gosvami tells, we should accept what is favorable for devotional service and reject what is unfavorable. That means detachment, the willingness to endure the difficulty of giving up something that may give us happiness and comfort for higher purpose to please Krishna, to please guru, to please the Vaishnavas.

So Bharat returned to Ayodhya. Rama and Sita, Laxmana lived in Chitrakut. Ultimately they entered the Dandakaranya Forest. And in the holy place of Panchavati, Ravana stole Sita away while Rama and Laxmana were chasing after the golden deer. When Rama returned and found Sita gone, he was searching everywhere. In his search he came across Jatayu, a great devotee and a dear friend of Maharaj Dasratha, who was very old. Even though Jatayu understood he didn't have a chance of saving Sita, he was not willing to live and see the injustice happening in front of him. And with all the power and all the force within him, he fought against Ravana. Ultimately his wings were cut and he lay there bleeding as Sita embraced him crying in gratitude; he gave his life for her. Rama was so grateful to Jatayu; on that very day he sent him back home back to Godhead, to Vaikuntha. He was willing to suffer and die for his devotee.

Deliverance of Kabandha: Rama and Laxmana in separation of Sita traversed hundreds and hundreds of miles and eventually they came upon one enormous monster personality; his name was Kabandha. His body was as big as mountain. His arms were eight miles long. He had one eye in the middle of his chest and he had a massive mouth that was in the place of his stomach and he was roaring. Not like that! And with his arms he was taking handfuls of elephants and tigers and all sorts of buffaloes and just devouring in his mouth constantly. He grabbed with one hand Laxmana and with one hand Rama, and eventually they cut his arms off. Kabandha, he told Rama and Laxmana, "Dig a hole and burn my body." They did and a beautiful demigod, a celestial being came out of the smoke. And he explained he actually was a beautiful demigod with incredible intelligence and very beautiful bodily features, enormous wealth, but he was proud. And there was a sage who kind of looked ugly, so he made fun of him and it was due to his false pride.

When we think we are better than others, that's a symptom of serious disease. We may by the grace of Krishna have greater fortune than others, but if we understand that it's a grace of Krishna, we do not consider ourselves to be better than others. Krishnadas Kaviraj Gosvami in Sri Caitanya Caritamrta, he is offering his obeisances, his dandavat pranams to the great avatras of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and his associates, the panchatatva, to their associates, to all the great self-realized saints and to all the leaders – and even the brand new devotees. He is offering his obeisances to everyone. And Srila Prabhupada explains that it is coming from the heart; that's the symptom of a great

person. When we have false ego, it's just a matter of time till we make offences, and when we make offences we lose our position. Caitanya Mahaprabhu in Caitanya Bhagvat, he raised both of his arms and he gave us a simple order. He said, "I will deliver anyone who just do two things – always chant Krishna's holy name and do not criticize others." So simple, but because of the false ego, it's very difficult.

So the blessing of this great sage, he put him in this body of Kabandha to learn his lesson. And then the deva told Rama and Laxmana, "You are searching for Sita. She has been kidnapped by another and you have been exiled from your kingdom. You require to make alliance with someone who has realization of the feeling of what you are going through. Sugriva is one of the chief of the monkeys. He has been exiled from his kingdom and his wife Ruma has been abducted and is under the captivity of his brother Bali. No one in the world could understand what Sugriva is going through better than you, and no one in the world could understand what you are going through better than Sugriva. If you help him to get his wife back and his kingdom, then he will search the entire earth over and over again relentlessly until he finds Sita and brings her back. And his minister Hanuman is the most empowered transcendental person who could do anything. Not far from here, there is a lake called pampa, it is so beautiful."

Kabandha explained - pages and pages of Valmiki Ramayana - the beauty of Pampa Sarovar, the types of trees and flowers, fruits, the birds, varieties of birds and the songs that they sing. "And it is there at the Rishimukhya Mountain close to Pampa Sarovar that the great sage Matanga Rishi was living with his disciples and one of his disciples, an old lady from an outcaste family named Shabari, is still waiting there. Her Guru Matanga Rishi took all the disciples back to the spiritual world, but told her to wait for You, to serve You." Offering his pranams to Rama, Kabandha in his celestial form went back to heavenly world.

Meeting Shabari at Pampa Sarovar: *This pastime is described above.*

Rama's feelings of separation: Rama and Laxmana were walking in this beautiful area of Pampa Sarovar. They were seeing the trees and the fragrances of flowers - so intoxicating - and all the animals they were seeing were so happy. The birds were singing, the peacocks were calling for the peahens and the peahens were calling for peacocks. And seeing this environment which was so enjoyable, Lord Sri Ramacandra could only remember Sita. "In this most beautiful most enjoyable heavenly place how can I be happy without sharing it with my beloved Sita?" This is the nature of the love.

In this world, how to see this world as God's spiritual energy, which it actually is? Krishna tells in Gita, "For one who sees me everywhere and everything in me, for that person I am never lost nor they are ever lost to me." It's the spirit of seva that gives us the power to see things in this way. For a great devotee of the Lord, when we see a flower, we don't think, 'How I will enjoy this?' but we think, 'How Krishna will enjoy this? Let me share this with Krishna.'

That's the nature of Rama's love for devotees. Pampa Sarovar, such a beautiful place in every way, and Rama was thinking, 'How I want to share this with Sita!' But in that experience of wanting to share the most beautiful thing in all of creation with Sita, he was feeling separation from Sita. Very loudly Sri Ramacandra cried and Laxmana was trying to pacify him. "Certainly as Kabandha said, we will find this monkey Sugriva and we will make alliance with him and we will find Sita."

And Rama was seeing Sita in everything, when he was hearing the sweet birds singing and when he was smelling the sweetness of the flower's fragrances and the beauty of pampa

sarovar in the forest. He was only thinking how he wanted to share this with Sita and his heart was breaking.

First meeting of Rama and Hanuman

Meanwhile, Sugriva was on the Rishimukhya Mountain. He turned to Hanuman and some of his ministers and said, "I hear somebody crying out there. What is this?" And they jumped to a peak and they looked down to Pampa Sarovar. They saw Rama and Laxmana. They didn't know who they were. Sugriva became very afraid. "They look like Brahmins with matted hair. They are wearing tree bark, but at the same time very strong. Look at their arms, look at their shoulders and they have bows and arrows! They must be assistants of Bali who were sent to kill me."

Isn't it true? We see the whole world according to our consciousness. When we are fearful of something, somehow or the other everything we see, we connect with that fear. If we ourselves are envious, we will see envy in everyone, even if there isn't any. If we are lusty we will see everyone being lusty. If we are greedy we will judge everyone as being motivated by greed, and if we love Krishna we will see the essence within everyone that they also have potential to love Krishna.

So Sugriva was very fearful but Hanuman looked down and said, "I don't think there is anything for you to worry about. After all, you don't even know who they are and their disposition looks very beautiful and very, very mild, very benevolent to me." Sugriva said, "How can I trust anyone when I know that Bali is trying to kill me?" Then he ordered Hanuman, "Take the form of an ascetic Brahmin and go down and find out who they are." So Hanuman changed his form by his own yogic powers to look like a sadhu, Brahmin and he came down the hill to Pampa Sarovar and he approached Rama and Laxmana. As soon as he saw them something happened: his heart totally melted with ecstatic love for these two people. He identified himself. First he spoke beautiful words to praise Rama and Laxmana. He was glorifying the beauty of their forms, the compassionate nature of their disposition, the way they walked, the way they talked. It was a beautiful glorification and then he said, "As far as me, I am Hanuman. I am the messenger of Sugriva. I am actually in disguise. I am really a monkey. Please tell me who are you." And Rama said to Laxmana, "This Hanuman. He has identified himself. He has spoken the most perfect, precise sanskrit poetry. No one can speak like this! And not only was the form in which he spoke so absolutely attractive, but the content of his emotion, his sincerity, his devotion and his love was so deep and so real. And he has told us that he is the messenger of Sugriva, and that's who we are looking for to make alliance with to find Sita. Now Laxmana, tell him who we are."

Laxmana told the whole story to Hanuman, about the beautiful city of Ayodhya, about the intentions of Kaikei, their exile, their beautiful life in Chitrakuta with the sages and the rishis. He told about the abduction of Sita and how Kabandha that celestial being has informed us that we should make alliance with your master Sugriva to find Sita. Hanuman was so happy, he said, "Today there will be unbreakable friendship between the two of you. Get on my back and I will take you there." So Rama went on one shoulder of Hanuman and Laxmana went on the other shoulder.

Meeting of Lord Rama and Sugriva

Hanumanji, he jumped to the top of Rishimukhya Mountain and within seconds he put Rama and Laxmana down in front of Sugriva. They spoke together. Sugriva explained his situation, the pain of his heart. He said, "My brother Bali has stolen my wife Ruma. He banished me from his kingdom and he is constantly looking to kill me." Rama promised, "I will restore your wife and kingdom." Sugriva said, "I promise, I will bring back Sita." They held hands and then Rama lovingly embraced Sugriva. And seeing this Hanuman was so happy – the embrace of Rama and Sugriva – that immediately Hanuman started a sacred

fire. Hanuman was expert at everything. He learnt singing from Saraswati. No one could sing like him and he knew every type of instrument perfectly. He could recite poetry; he knew sastras by memory. His dancing, his heroic deeds, his yogic asanas, his mastery over medicine and his brahminical duties of performing yajnas, Hanuman was expert at everything. Not simply because he was trained in all these ways, he was blessed by Brahaspati the guru of the demigods to have the same knowledge as him. Everything known by Surya, the Sun god was shared with them. All the beautiful music and poetry talents of Saraswati were given to him and the heroic powers of Indra and Vayu and Siva were all at the disposal of Hanuman.

So he performed a yajna and Rama and Sugriva sat by that fire as he recited the incantations and mantras so that Sugriva and Rama took vows to be alliance to help each other in life and death. Then it is explained in Ramayana that Hanuman went to cook. He was also an expert cook. He went and got some herbs and roots and fruits and vegetables from the forest and he cooked them very nicely and served them to Rama and Sugriva. Sugriva explained his story. "Here in Kishkinda there was an asura and his name was Mayavi. He attacked Kishkinda and especially challenged Bali for fight. Bali was so powerful..."

He explained that Vriksharaj was the king of monkeys. And he had two sons; one was the expansion of Indra, Bali, and other was the expansion of Surya, who was Sugriva. Bali was the elder brother and both Sugriva and Vriksharaj, they had such honor and respect for Bali's incredible powers. After Vriksharaj retired and left this world, Bali became the King. He was so powerful. He (Sugriva) explained some of his powers. He said that Bali, he would go to all four oceans every day. He would go to the Southern Ocean and chant his sandhya, his Gayantri mantra, then he would jump the same morning to the Eastern ocean and do his Gayatri mantra, then to the Western ocean and then to the Northern ocean. Now these oceans are tens and thousands of miles away from each other, but he would do that just as part of his morning every day. And one day Ravana attacked Bali, because Ravana was looking for someone to fight with and he had heard how powerful Bali was. So he challenged Bali. Bali was doing his Gayatri in ocean. Bali just grabbed Ravana and put him under his arm and just held him there. And Ravana's arms were coming out on one side and his legs were on another, but his face was under Bali's arms. Bali just effortlessly just kept him there and Ravana with all his powers just couldn't get out. But for Bali, he still had three more oceans to go to and bathe. So he jumped to the Eastern ocean, jumped to the Western ocean, jumped to the Northern ocean, jumped back to the Southern ocean, did his Gayantri mantra, took his baths and all the while Ravana was trapped under his arm; not a nice place to keep somebody. Ultimately, like you would deal with just a little insect, he just let go of Ravana and said, "Ok. Now what do you want?" And Ravana said, "You are very powerful. You are very strong. I cannot even conceive of you." And he praised him and he said, "We should be allies. We should be friends. We should defend each other." Bali said, "All right, we will do." Bali was so powerful.

So this Mayavi came to attack Kishkinda and he insulted Bali. And Bali was... he didn't like to be insulted. So he went and attacked Mayavi, gigantic enormous person. They were fighting and fighting and fighting and ultimately Bali was pulverizing this demon, and he ran away. Then Bali ran after him with Sugriva, and they ran and they ran and they ran and Mayavi ran into a cave, a deep cave. Bali told Sugriva, "You wait outside here. I am going in." Sugriva said, "No. No. I will go in with you, I am your brother. I am your faithful servant. I will do anything for you. I will fight with you." Bali said, "No, you wait out here and if I win the fight then we will go down together, back to Kishkinda. But if I lose then you should seal the cave with a massive rock so that this demon Mayavi could not get out." So Sugriva waited for a long time.

They were fighting and fighting and fighting and he could hear the fighting happening. Suddenly he heard a massive roar and then blood was flowing out of the front of the cave. Sugriva did not hear Bali's voice. He only heard Mayavi's voice. So he was thinking, "My brother, my lord is dead." Sugriva was absolutely broken hearted. He was weeping, he was crying and he took a gigantic rock and sealed the cave. He went back to Kishkinda and told to everyone, "Our king Bali is dead." Tara, Bali's wife was weeping; Angada, Bali's son was weeping; everyone was weeping, and more than everyone Sugriva was weeping. He loved his brother; he was totally faithful to him. He had no aspiration but to serve him and assist him. The ministers told Sugriva, "You have to be the king, you are his younger brother." Sugriva said, "No. How could I take the throne of Bali!" They said, "It's an emergency. Our dynasty cannot survive without a king." They literally ordered him to be coronated, and as broken hearted and separation from his beloved brother as he was, he accepted. And now he was living as the king of Kishkinda.

After sometime Bali – it took him a while to move that rock – and he came down to his kingdom and saw Sugriva sitting on his throne. He was wild with fury: my brother, he tried to kill me by sealing me in the cave just so that he could take my wife, could take my throne, and could take all my power and property to be his own; see how greedy, see how envious he is! Bali was so much in anger, he roared and attacked Sugriva. Sugriva was shocked. He was so happy to see Bali was still alive, but he was so sad to see that he was so angry. He said, "Bali, I am so happy that you are alive. I thought you are dead. I was crying for weeks for you." Bali came to kill him. Sugriva said, "I will give you the throne back, I will give you everything back, I will serve you just like before. I didn't mean this; it's a misunderstanding." But Bali, his passions were so high.

This is what anger can do to one. Bhagavad-Gita explains when contemplating the object of the senses lust develops. From that lust attachment; when it is unfulfilled it become anger; from anger we become bewildered in our memory. When the memory is bewildered intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost we can do the things that are so detrimental to ourselves and everyone around us.

Sugriva was innocent. He had good motives. He only wanted to serve but he was totally misunderstood, and Bali was determined to kill him. They were fighting, but Sugriva was no match; so he ran. He had to run away and he remembered. Sugriva was telling Rama this story that there was one place in the world where Bali could not go. There was a monstrous *asura* named Dundabhi who took a massive form like a giant demoniac buffalo. He went to the god of the ocean and said, "I want to fight with you." He said, "No, No, you win." He went to all these different demigods; nobody would fight with him. Finally they all said, "You go to Bali if you want a good fight. He is the one to fight." So he came to Kishkinda and they fought. Sugriva was explaining what kind of fight it was. Ultimately they fought for so many hours and hours and hours and finally Bali just grabbed him by his horns and threw him on the ground and punched him and punched him and punched him and picked him up and whirled him around and then threw him down again and punched him and kicked him and jumped on him with his knees and Dundabhi was dead. And he was so enthusiastic, he whirled around his dead body and threw him eight miles and it landed in Matanga Rishi's ashram. And large quantities of this demon's blood splattered everywhere and kind of on sages bodies and desecrated their yagnas. And Matanga rishi was not happy. He said, "I curse, if that monkey that threw this demon's body and made everything in my ashram impure by blood, if he ever comes within a four miles of radius of my ashram, he will turn into stone." So Bali heard that and he was travelling the whole world but he would never come to Rishimukhya Mountain. Sugriva was running around the world trying to escape from Bali's wrath, but he ultimately took shelter of Rishimukhya Mountain. And Hanuman who promised to his father Surya that, "I will always be by his side to protect him as a friend, no matter what happens," he was always there, willing to accept exile, to be with Sugriva.

Lord Rama liberates Bali

Rama said, "Let us go. I will slay Bali, give you back your wife and the kingdom you deserve." Sugriva said, "I know, I know your faith and your word of honor is more precious than anything in creation. But still I am afraid. I have seen Bali's power." Laxmana said, "What does Rama have to do to prove his power?" He took Rama to Dundabhi's bones. It was like mountain. Just a skeleton, it weighed thousands of tons. He said, "Bali picked him up and threw him. Can you pick him up Rama?" And Rama with one toe of one foot effortlessly kicked this skeleton and the skeleton flew 80 miles away. But Sugriva was so terrorized by Bali, he said, "Well, you know when Bali did it, he had flesh, he had fat, he had muscles. You just did the skeleton, but do you see these Sal trees?" There were seven Sal trees in a row, each of them with a width of 30 human arms; and this is Tretayuda, would not cover the width of these trees. He said and these sal trees are extremely dense and strong. He said, "Bali used to uproot them and snap them. If you can shoot an arrow through one of these trees, I can understand that you can conquer my brother." Rama smiled and he took out an arrow and chanted a special mantra. The arrow went flying.

He shot that one arrow. It went through one tree, another tree, another tree. It went through all seven trees and then that arrow after piercing through all the seven trees, it went down into the earth, went to the very bottom of the center of the earth, went to patal loka, then it came out again and went to the air like blazing fire and entered once again into Rama's quiver. Sugriva was convinced.

Rama told Sugriva, "Go to Kishkinda and challenge Bali to a battle." Now this is taking serious faith. Sugriva went to the outskirts of Kishkinda and with a mighty roar, he started insulting Bali. Bali was furious. "Who is this little brother of mine? He ran away from the battle as a coward and now he is coming to fight with me, challenging me, insulting me." He ran out; they started fighting. They were both incredibly powerful, but within a short amount of time Bali was pulverizing poor Sugriva. He was pounding him and pounding him and Sugriva was suffering miserably and waiting where is Rama. "He is supposed to help me!" And finally when he was on the verge of defeat and death, he somehow or the other wiggled out of Bali's clutches and ran away as fast as he could and jumped upon Rishimukhya Mountain. He was bloody, he was beaten, he was bruised, he was totally exhausted, he was just lying on the ground, and Rama came. Sugriva said, "I trusted you. I exposed myself to my brother's wrath. You promised you would protect me. Why didn't you protect me?" Rama said, "I wanted to protect you."

He said, "Then why didn't you protect me?"

"Because you and Bali look identical, and when you were fighting, I didn't know who was Bali and who was you. And I was afraid, if I shot, I may shoot you. So go back." Rama told Laxmana, "Go into the forest and make a nice garland of roots and flowers and herbs put it on Sugriva's body." And Laxmana came and made a garland and put it on Sugriva. He said, "Now when you are fighting I will know who you are, because you have a garland."

"I will go back and challenge." Such faith!

Sugriva comes down; he is already beaten and exhausted; he rested a little and he came down some hours later and he started roaring, "Bali, I challenge. You are a coward, you have stolen, you are immoral, you are worst person." He just started saying terrible things about Bali. Bali, even more angry, and he was about to rush out and fight and kill. And Tara, Bali's wife, she said, "There is something wrong. You should not go." Bali said, "Get out of my way." She stood in front of him and said, "Do not go; there is something wrong here. You just defeated him; he was on the verge of death. Why would he come back to

fight with you again with such confidence? I have heard that there are two princes, the sons of Dasratha, who have made alliance with him. They are there to help him; they will kill you. You have done so many immoral things. Your destiny will be to die if you go out there to try to fight him. Just stay here." But Bali was so much upset. His anger and his ego was so big. He told Tara, "I know I am in no danger. You don't know what you are talking about. Get out of my way. I am going." And he rushed out and he grabbed Sugriva and he started fighting and fighting and fighting and ultimately Bali defeated Sugriva, and Sugriva was lying on the ground helplessly. And Bali picked up – his knees were on Sugriva's defeated Bali – and then with his hands clenched together, he lifts both of his hands up above his head to pound it down and to give the death blow to Sugriva. Meanwhile Ramacandra was behind the leaves of some tree, watching. And just as Bali raised his arms to smash that down with final death blow, Rama let loose an arrow. His bow, he shot it with such force that it sounded like a thunder. And it hit the chest of Bali and pierced his heart. Bali's body was so strong and so hard and so full of power that it... when it hit and penetrated the body of Bali, it was like a thunder that shook the entire earth.

Blood came and Bali fell down. He was lying there, he didn't know what happened. Sri Rama came before him. Bali was very disturbed. He said, "Why did you do that? What kind of dharma is this? Why didn't you fight me face to face? Why you were hiding behind trees so I could not even see you when you killed me from that position? This is not the activity of a Kshatriya; this is the activity of a cowherd. If you wanted Sita back, why didn't you make alliance with me? I could have defeated Ravana." Rama replied, "You are speaking of adharma, actions against dharma." He said, "I am simply an instrument of your own destiny. Where was your talk about dharma when you created such havoc and cruelty to your brother's life? Sugriva was the most faithful servant you ever had; he loved you, he served you. You made him live in fear. You banished him to live in a mountain and you tortured him by taking his wife as your own because of your arrogance, because of your cruelty. This was your karmic destiny, but because you will die from my arrow, you will be liberated of all your karma and you will attain my abode. And besides that I am a Kshatriya and you are in a body of a monkey.

In this way Bali needed that arrow on his chest to be sober enough to hear these teachings and he accepted it and with tears of love and gratitude, he bowed down to Rama. He said, "Everything you say is true. This is my destiny that you have given me and I am grateful to you." At that time Tara, Bali's wife, hearing what had happened she came running out to be with her husband. And some of the monkeys who were Bali's associates, they stopped her and said, "We have to escape because now Sugriva is going to be the king. And because we have persecuted him for all these years, he is going to destroy us. What to speak of what he might do to you and to your son, take him away." Tara ran to the side of her husband and Angad came to his father Bali's side. They were weeping and crying and Tara spoke. She spoke to Bali who was still barely breathing.

She said, "My husband, why didn't you listen to me? Don't blame anyone for what's happening. You caused so much pain to Sugriva and to Ruma his wife. You engaged in so many arrogant egoistic activities that caused so many offences; this is your karmic destiny, but because beloved Lord Rama has given you, how fortunate you are!"

Bali turned to Rama. He said, "Please give my wife Tara all protection, and my son Angad please give him happiness, protection, accept him as your son Sugriva and love him as such. It's my only wish." And then he told Tara, "You should accept Sugriva in the same way you would accept me." And then he said to Anagad, "Consider Sugriva to be your own father and love him and serve him as you have loved and served me." And then he turned to Sugriva and said, "I have made so many offences to you. I beg your forgiveness. We could have and should have lived happily as brothers for all these years, but due to my

arrogance and my anger I have caused you so much pain. I am sorry." Bali then took off golden necklace from his chest. It was the necklace of the king and he put it around the neck of Sugriva and said, "Now with the grace of Lord Sri Rama, following the guidelines of Sri Rama, be the king and rule with all health and happiness with a true principles of dharma in the centre." And then looking at the beautiful lotus like face of Sri Rama, Bali breathed his last. When he gave up his body, Tara fell to the ground along with Angad and Sugriva. They were all crying, crying and crying .Sugriva said to Rama, "My brother, he punished me, but he never killed me. But at the first chance I had, I killed him and now look at all the sufferings of his wife, child and everyone else because of me." Sugriva told Rama, "Hanuman and others will help find you Sita. I ask permission. Let me take my life. I cannot live with my brother dead like this." And then Tara with incessant tears pouring tears from her lotus eyes, she said to Rama, "With the same arrow that is pierced in the heart of my husband, please take that arrow and pierce my heart and if you think that this is not dharma to kill the woman like me, don't think like in that way, because I am non-different than my husband and I am half of his body. Just consider that it's the completion of your killing of him, but I cannot live any longer."

Rama spoke to Tara. He said that the soul is eternal, for the soul there is neither birth nor death. The physical body is subjected to birth, growth, sustenance, old, deterioration, old age, disease and ultimately death. For the embodied being death is certain and re- birth is certain.

na hanyate hanyamane sarire

Krishna says in Gita that for the atma, living force, there is no death. "I have liberated the soul of your husband. At the same time, on the physical level he had to meet the destiny he created for himself by his cruelty and offences. Now he is free from those offences," and he (Lord Rama) said to her (Tara), "You are the mother of Anagad. You have duties to perform as his mother. So stay in this world and be happy. And I will bless you, and Sugriva will protect you under all circumstances." Tara was completely pacified. Then Ramacandra turned to Sugriva. He said, "If you love your brother, why don't you do something for him? Now he is dead; his soul is immortal but his body is dead. So, all your lamentation and feeling sorry for yourself and blaming yourself, what is it doing for him? Perform the last rites for him and help me to liberate his soul forever."

Sugriva was pacified and Rama promised Angada all protection for the eternal soul of his father, for his mother and for him. There was a royal funeral. They brought a wood palanquin and put jewels and silks and everything ornate on it and they carried Bali. It was incredible event with such feeling and such love for everyone. And after the chanting of the mantras and offering of heartfelt prayers, Angad circumambulated the body of his father and lit it on fire. Rama told Laxmana and Hanuman, "Now you should coronate Sugriva as the king of Kishkinda." Then Hanuman did.

Why didn't Rama perform this ceremony? Because Rama would not enter into the city of Kishkinda even though it was a jungle city. He said, "When I was exiled, I made a promise that I would not enter any habited city or village." So there is a place on the banks of Tungabhadra river where you will be going, and it was in this place where Hanumanji and Laxmana coronated Sugriva as the king.

Lord Rama's feelings of separation during the Catur Masya

Dark clouds were forming in the sky and rains started pouring. In those days monsoons were really monsoons. It was not possible to travel .Rama told Sugriva, "Four months of chaturmasya, I will remain alone on the Pasarvana Mountain or Malyavanta, living in a cave. And you live in your kingdom of Kishkinda. When the monsoon rains are complete we will search for Sita." Sugriva gave his words. When Rama and Sugriva first met on Rishimukhya Mountain, Sugriva told Rama what he heard. This story he said: "Actually, not long ago, Hanuman and myself and few others of my monkey friends and ministers,

we were on top of a mountain sitting on a rock and we saw something incredible. There was a terrible powerful being on a chariot on the sky and he was holding a beautiful, beautiful woman. she was weeping. She was crying. She was crying, 'Rama, Laxmana, Rama, Laxmana, save me, save me.' She looked so desperate. She was trying to squirm off his arms, but he held it very tightly. She saw us sitting on the rock and without Ravana seeing she tore a piece of her cloth and put some jewels in that cloth, tied it up and threw it down. I have those jewels. I kept them in the cave that I am living." Rama said, "You have Sita's jewels. Show me those jewels." Sugriva ran back to his cave. As part of your yatra, you will go to Sugriva's caves where of course those jewels of Sita were kept. Sugriva ran out with that little cloth and untied them. When Rama saw those jewels, he knew them to be Sita's own personal jewels. Rama held them to his head and cried and cried and cried. He was seeing Sita in each of those jewels. Seeing that, Hanuman, Sugriva, Jambavana and all others they vowed to Rama, "We will conquer Ravana and bring Sita back to you."

During the four months of the rainy season, which actually includes now, even though it's not raining, Rama was living right here in a cave. From the mouth of the cave Rama and Laxmana would look out and see the lightning and thunder and torrents and torrents of monsoon rain pouring down. They didn't go anywhere. Rama simply constantly chanted the name of Sita, meditating on his beloved Sita's love, thinking of all their intimate pastimes together, and with such profound compassion from his heart meditating on what she must be going through. Feeling the pain in his own heart in separation from Sita, he knew that Sita was feeling even more pain in separation from him. But she was under the control of an evil, demoniac person that only wanted to exploit her. This was the meditation of Rama as he was sitting here in those four months. And for Laxmana who loved Rama billions of times more than he loved his own life, seeing the pain of separation from Sita that Rama was enduring was causing the same pain and more to Laxmana, just waiting for the monsoon rains to end.

Ramacandra is Bhagvan. He is the controller of all controllers. Mahavishnu, the creator of the cosmic manifestation, Garbhadaakshayi Vishnu the creator of each universe from whom Brahma is born by, are all mere expansions of expansions of expansions of Rama. Yet playing the role of a human being to perform the pastimes that will enchant our hearts, and while enchanting and attracting our hearts through the drama and emotions of these pastimes, he is teaching us the highest principles of dharma and giving us the purest example of how we should live with the greatest integrity in every situation.

As little human beings sometimes we complain, 'Why is this happening to me?' But Rama who is all attractive, all powerful, Supreme Personality of Godhead, when he took the role of human being, what he went through! His own beloved step mother Kaikayi turned against him and totally betrayed him. He was exiled from his own kingdom. His father died of separation from him. His beloved wife was abducted and he was living waiting for the rains to end. Indra is the Lord of the rain. Indra is his obedient servant. All he had to say was, "Indra, shut off the rain. And Indra would have no choice." Bali was the son of Indra! But the lila of Rama is so deep, so mysterious and so beautiful that detaching himself from his supreme power to show us and demonstrate his love in the sweetest way, he waited for the rains to end. And how painful it was!

While they were sitting up here in Prasravan or Malyavanta, Rama would tell Laxmana, "Waiting for these four months of rain to end, every moment is like millions and millions of years in separation from Sita. I am feeling helpless. We can't even look for her in this condition." And as we have already spoken, Ramacandra, there is a murthi inside; he is chanting on beads names of Sita and meditating upon her within his heart with such compassion. This *virahabhava* or *virpralamba*.

Love in separation is one of the deepest most intimate mysteries in the path of bhakti yoga, love in separation. When our beloved is physically before us, the love of our heart pours out as an offering to them. When our beloved is not before us, in separation, that love goes inside deeper and deeper and deeper. Now in the material sense that love is very painful, but in the spiritual sense, Krishna is the paramatma within our hearts, he is bhavagrahi janardana, he reciprocates with our love. When our love goes deeper, intensified fueled by the separation of fire of our love, it blazes higher and higher and harder and harder, it goes deeper into our very soul and Rama or Krishna is receiving that love by giving us most intimate ecstasy; that is love in separation, a highest ecstasy when God or the Krishna is the object.

It was that ecstasy of love in separation that Rama was feeling for Sita here in Malyavanta, and it was that same love in separation in Ashok Grove of Ravana's garden in Lanka that Sita was experiencing for Rama. They were together united in the most intimate way.

Sugriva lost in selfish enjoyment

When the monsoons ended, Laxmana seeing the condition of Rama tolerating his four months, he was really eager for the search to begin, but nothing happened. The Monsoons ended, the days passed, weeks passed and Rama and Laxmana are still sitting, up here in the cave. Where is Sugriva? What happened is this. Sugriva was now the king and he had all these beautiful princesses and queens and everybody else all around him. He had all the luxuries of Bali and he was in Bali's inner chamber, enjoying like anything. He was drinking all these intoxicating nectars and he was drinking all these other things and he was eating the finest foods of berries and roots and whatever his cooks were making, and he had golden thrones and beds and silks, he was enjoying.

He (Sugriva) was so intoxicated by material enjoyment, he totally forgot about Rama and Sita. Is that possible? Yes. That's why we are in this material world. We are just so much busy trying to enjoy and trying to struggle that we forget. Sometimes we need a serious awakening to remember what our real purpose is.

Laxmana said to Rama, "Where is Sugriva?" Rama said to Laxmana, "I think he is so intoxicated by his new position as the king that he has completely forgotten about us." Laxmana was trembling with anger. He said, "I will go down and I will punish him." Laxmana walked down from the hill. He was anger personified. Meanwhile Hanumanji, he told Sugriva, "What about Rama? What about Sita? You gave your word. You should tell Nila to proclaim to all the monkeys throughout the world to come and assemble to search for Sita." And Sugriva, by Hanuman's mercy kind of woke up a little and said, "Yes, call them." So the message was out. Meanwhile Laxmana came down. He didn't see anything happening and gradually more and more monkeys were assembling and they saw Laxmana, so disturbed. They went to tell Sugriva that Laxmana is really angry. Sugriva, he told Angad, "You go out and tell Laxmana that I will meet him a little later. I can't meet him now. Look at me!" He was in the middle of enjoying. So Angad went out and then the message came back that 'Laxmana is really angry with you.' What was his anger? He was for four months seeing Rama's emotions in separation and here is Sugriva enjoying all these luxuries, completely oblivious to Rama's suffering. Rama living in a cave and he is living in the highest luxuries of the world and it's all because of Rama that he is there.

Rama told Laxmana something we should always remember. He said, "The wildest attribute of human character is to not be grateful." When we are given something and we have no gratitude that is one of the lowest most condemned states of consciousness. It is the foundational for bhakti to have a grateful heart. If you are actually grateful, in honor or dishonor, happiness or distress, pleasure or pain, health or disease, success or failure, victory or defeat, if we have an actual grateful heart, 'tatenu kampam susumikshu manu,

bhunjana evatma krtan vibhagam', 'Krishna I am Yours in any situation. How can I serve you? Let me take shelter. Let me call out your holy names: Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare | Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare ||' Being grateful is something more than just saying, 'thank you' and then criticizing the person. Being grateful is a state of consciousness, a state of awakened awareness. Are we grateful for every breath we breathe? For every morsel of food or water, for the ability to see, for the ability to hear, for the ability to move? If you have asthma and you are dying because can't even get one breath, you start to value, what air really means to us. We are all just breathing thousands and thousands of times a day with no gratitude whatsoever. But if you have an asthma attack, you would give everything you own just for some air to come into your lungs. So sometimes the difficulties of life are there to help to deepen our awareness of what's really valuable. If you are a devotee, even at the time of death we are grateful that we are eternal souls and we are grateful that Krishna is here to deliver me at this moment. And this how we should be living with every breath of our life. In bhakti we express our gratitude through seva, not through just saying 'thank you'. We say thank you but if we mean it, we live that thank you. 'How may I serve you in every situation? Because I am grateful.'

It was by Rama's grace that Sugriva was freed from the clutches of exile, fearing his life 24 hours a day. It was by Rama's grace that he had his kingdom, his wife and everything around and now he was enjoying all those gifts of Rama so much that he was insensitive to Rama's suffering. Rama was suffering the same way he was suffering, but now that he wasn't, he had no acknowledgement of Rama's suffering. But Laxmana, he considered this to be such a violation of human dignity. He came to fix it. And when Sugriva heard that Laxmana was angry, he told Tara, Bali's wife. He said, "Go out, because Laxmana is going to feel sorry for you, because you lost your husband and try to pacify him." So Tara came out and told Laxmana, "Please understand that Sugriva, he was without any of these pleasures for so many years. And now it has been given to him and you know he has material nature. He has fall prey to his mind, he has fall prey to his senses, he has these weaknesses. But ultimately he is a good person. Just forgive him. He will wake up; he will be all right. He is trying to wake up right now." And then Angad said, "Come, come, I will bring you to see my father." And Laxmana walked into that room. He saw all of the fine decorations and comforts, luxuries and he saw these beautiful females and he saw these drinks and foods in all directions and he saw Sugriva laying there wallowing in pleasure. And he was thinking of Rama sitting on the stone floor of the cave in separation from Sita, and he looked at Sugriva with eyes that were red. He looked like he was about to burn the universe and Sugriva apologized. Seeing Laxmana in that state, really sobered him and woke him up. He begged forgiveness. He said, "Let us go immediately to Rama. The search has already begun. I have already called my soldiers and they are all coming from all different directions."

Sugriva dispatches his army for searching Sita

They all came up to where we are sitting today to meet with Ramacandra. They started making plans. Sugriva was explaining all the different parts of the world that he was going to dispatch his people to search for Sita. Rama said to Sugriva, "How do you know in such detail about all these different places of the world?" And Sugriva said, "When I was running away from Bali, I ran all over the world. I could not escape him. So I saw these places." So this is a really good lesson. Even though he was in such a dangerous predicament running for his life, what he learnt there, he is now using in the service of the Lord. So similarly, even in our maya or illusion, for so many years living in this world we have gained so many skills and awareness and understanding. Now that we have come in contact with bhakti, devotional service, we can utilize all these things in the service of the Lord according to what's favorable for service.

He sent one fourth of monkeys, vanaras, in the northern direction and another east and west and he told them all, "I give you one month to find Sita. Go through every detail of every place. You must find her." And Sugriva said, "I will punish you if you are not back with the news within one month." So they all started going in different directions. And he then had Angad, Jambavana, Nila, and Hanuman; Sugriva said, "You go in southern direction because I think that's the way Ravana was going on the airplane." Sugriva began to speak to Hanumanji. He said, "Of everyone, I deeply believe you will be the one to find Sita, because of your love for Rama, your determination, your devotion. And on the basis of that love and devotion, your power, your intelligence, your determination, I am sure you will find Sita." Rama heard this and was so pleased by Sugriva's words to Hanuman. Rama approached Hanumanji and said, "Of all these devotees, I believe because of your devotion, you will find Sita. To give her confidence that you are truly my messenger, give her this ring." Rama took from his own finger, a ring with his name on it and with tears in his eyes he pushed that ring to his heart and said, "Give this to Sita and she will know. And tell her how I am in this cave crying and waiting to meet her again. I will do anything, I will destroy all the world to bring her back if necessary." Hanuman took the ring and then Rama told Hanuman certain secrets that no one in creation except Sita and Rama knew of their intimate interactions and said, "Tell her this and she will know that you are truly my messenger and tell her my love." Hanumanji took that ring and put it to his head and departed.

Sri Hampi Yatra Day 2 - evening: Significance of Damodara Lila

The citizens of Ayodhya, the family members of Lord Ramachandra, for 14 years lived in separation. In those days, there was no television, newspapers, internet, text messaging, cellular phones or any type of phones. When the citizen of Ayodhya went to Citrakuta, headed by Bharat, although it broke their hearts to see Rama and Laxmana with matted hairs and tree bark and seeing the most delicate, elegant Sita living in a straw hut, wearing tree bark, it broke their hearts. But still even when they refused to return, they knew that the ultimate and only true objects of their love were on a peaceful, beautiful place on the banks of Mandakini River in Chitrakoot in the company of some of the greatest yogis, sages and rishis in all the worlds. But then certainly news came to them that they left Chitrakut for the Dandakaranya forest and in Panchavati Ravana stole Sita. Rama and Laxmana were travelling throughout Eastern, Southern India, part of Western India, searching and searching. So they really didn't know, where Rama and Sita were—there was no news, only the longing of their hearts for them to return. On this day of Diwali, Rama sent a message through Hanumanji, that he would return to Ayodhya. The fourteen years of exile have expired. Lord Sri Ramachandra fulfilled the mission that he promised the demigods that he would do by descending into the world. He liberated mother earth and all of her children from the exploitative, cruel Ravana and along with Sita, Laxmana and all of his devotees headed by Hanuman, Jambava, Sugriva in the Puspak, the beautiful chariot of Kubera he was coming back to Ayodhya. Pushpak arrived in Nandigram, where Bharat was living as a hermit in a little straw hut, wearing only tree bark with his hair matted, eating the simplest of all foods. For 14 years, he had placed Lord Rama's wooden shoes (padukas) on your throne and he ruled his citizens. He ruled the whole kingdom by performing all the duties without accepting any of the comforts. He lived as Rama and Laxmana and Sita did in the forest. The citizens of Ayodhya were absolutely thrilled; it was the ultimate festival of all festivals to welcome Rama, Sita and Laxmana back to their homes.

The Essence of Diwali

As Rama was coming, he saw the citizens of Ayodhya in the night. They lit lamps, little fire lamps, some little, some bigger. All the citizens had lit their little lamps as an offering of their love to welcome Rama home and this is Diwali.

The principle is that each and every one of our hearts is Krishna's home or Rama's home, Sita's home; but due to darkness, darkness of ignorance, ignorance in the sense, forgetfulness of our true nature and what our real purpose of our life is, We allow the ahankara, the false ego, to keep us in the darkness of limitless misconceptions which give rise to so many fears and desires, attractions and aversions.

Not just 14 years but since time immemorial, for countless lifetimes, we have lived in such a condition. Bhakti is to light the lamp of our devotion—our love— to welcome Krishna, Sri Radha or in this case Rama and Sita back home, into our hearts. Back home back to Godhead. That home is within us— but we have forgotten. It's never lost; it's simply forgotten. Like a person who has an enormous treasury but forgets where it is. The person suffers in poverty but as soon as he is reminded... by modern day analogy, if you have a bank account with hundreds of millions of rupees but you forget your bank account number and you don't know anybody who knows it, you are living in desperation. You are starving, you are in poverty, doing all kinds of things, stealing and exploiting and enduring so much bad karma just to somehow or the other try to survive and enjoy and alleviate your suffering. But actually your wealth is there, you just forgot where it is.

Similarly, we are seeking trying to find out our wealth, our happiness, in money, in fame, in sensual pleasures, even in health and all of these things. These things can all be used for a very divine purpose; but the purpose is only divine when we understand what our

wealth really is. It's at home, within our own hearts, bhakti is that light, that lamp that lights our heart.

Supremacy of Bhakti

bhaktya mam abhijanati yavan yas casmi tattvatah

Krishna said it's only through such Bhakti, through the light of love that I can be understood as I am. Because Krishna is the husband of Goddess of fortune, He is the controller and proprietor of everything that exists and he is atmarama, he is completely self-satisfied. He does not need any of the temporary objects of this world but is *bhakta vatsala*, He is attracted by love and even a simple little leaf or flower or a little water, if its offered with love, Krishna would consider that to be more precious than all the treasures of kings.

In a few days, we will be going to Udupi. There is, in the Udupi Krishna temple, a painting on the wall, that painting depicts a very special pastime, where Narada Muni came to Dwarka and was going to take Krishna away and the queens of Dwarka, headed by Satyabhama, they were pleading don't take Krishna away! Krishna is the ultimate supreme wealth, so it was arranged that Krishna would sit on a scale. In those days, the scales were at two ends and balance would balance each other and Narada muni said, "If you put your most precious jewelry the weight of Krishna, then you can have Krishna and I will take jewels." So Krishna sat on one end of the scale and Satyabhama brought all her jewelry and the scale didn't move. Then all the other queens started bringing enormous amounts of jewelry. There was a huge pile on the other side of the scale and still, Krishna out-weighed all. Krishna is heavier than the heaviest, but if you wish, he is the lighter than the lightest. Rukmini came and she saw what was happening because it was really a crisis, Krishna was going to leave. So Rukmini had all the jewels taken off and she took a single tulsi leaf and put it to her heart and with humble prayerful mood, she chanted Krishna's names with love. And, there was nothing else on the scale, she placed that single leaf and Krishna flew up to the top. Krishna wanted to show that there is no greater wealth and there is nothing else he wants except the simplicity of our love and devotion. The citizens of Ayodhya, they had great wealth, but Rama didn't need any of that. They all offered a little lamp of their love to light the way for him back home, into the home of their hearts. For us this is what Diwali means when we offer our lamp, its not just offering fire, Krishna really doesn't need fire. He is Surya Narayan, He is the controller of the sun planet. The sun is millions of times bigger than the earth and its fire. Does He need a little lamp? But yet Surya Narayan is conquered by a little flame this big, if, it is offered with love. Godhead is light. So Diwali was the great time when all the citizens of Ayodhya welcomed Rama back home to Ayodhya, back home into their heart. It is one of the greatest, most beautiful celebrations historically from the time of Tretayuga and the same principle of *prema pumartho mahan*.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu explained: the greatest perfection is *prema*, divine love for Krishna. That is the story of Damodara lila which was also enacted on this day. In Gokul, Vrindavana, where everyone was preparing to celebrate Diwali in a very beautiful way, Yasoda Mayi, she rose very early in the morning because according to *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, and many of the Acharyas writings, Krishna, as soon as He learnt how to walk with his friends, began His pastimes of stealing butter from the homes of Gopis and the Gopis would come. It's interesting how people in India celebrate Diwali with so many fireworks. Doesn't sound like Rama coming back to Ayodhya; sounds like the battle of Lanka. Kaliyuga, everything is mixed up. It's not going to stop either.

Krishna wants us to adjust to the circumstances and carry on our devotional service. This is the principle. We cannot always change the circumstances, but we can always adjust our consciousness.

True Success

*matra-sparsas tu kaunteya
sitosna-sukha-duhkha-dah
agamapayino 'nityas
tams titiksasva bharata*

Lord Krishna tells that in this world, there are always dualities. There are always changes and often times we just have no power to change the environment. But, our real success in life is; how we sustain our spirit of seva, of service in devotion, we sustain the faithfulness and loyalty of our integrity and sadhana, whatever may come.

Sita remained totally faithful to Rama, twenty fours a day remembering Rama, whether she was sitting beside him on the throne of Ayodhya, whether she was walking through darkest, most dangerous forest barefoot or even when she was surrounded by *rakshasis* and being threatened cruelly by Ravana. Ravana could not defeat her because he could not take away her will to serve Rama, to please Rama, and that's really our success. Everyone has to die. Some people think, what's the use of becoming a devotee, you still have to get sick, you still have to die; but that's only the body. The real victory of a devotee is in life and death, in happiness and distress, honor, dishonor, pleasure and pain, victory, defeat, health or disease, in life and death. We adjust ourselves and remember Krishna and the simplest way to remember God is to remember the name of God, by chanting: *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare | Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare ||'*

Sri Hampi Yatra Day 3 - morning: Hanuman's Finding Mother Sita **The Nature of Compassion**

We are meeting in the very place, according to Sri Valmiki Ramayana, where Hanumanji, Rama and Laxmana first met. This is Pampa Sarovar. We were explaining yesterday, Kabandha, after he took his celestial form, in a spirit of service to Lord Rama, he expressed that the best person to help you is someone who feels what you feel. This is the principle of compassion.

"The primary characteristic of a saintly person, one who is truly intoxicated with ecstatic love of God, who wishes to do the most essential service for the Lord within this world, they are para dukh dukhi, that means the suffering of others is their own suffering and happiness of others is their happiness."

Kabandha explained that there is a monkey chief, Sugriva, whose brother had stolen away his wife and exiled him from his kingdom and similarly Lord Rama, Ravana had stolen his wife and he was also exiled from his kingdom. So you will understand what Sugriva is feeling and he will understand what you are feeling. And in that spirit you will give your lives for each other.

Developing Love and Surrender

Many pages of Ramayana describe Kabandha's description of pampa sarovar. At that time where we are sitting was one of the most beautiful places on all of earth. Forests, flowers and just behind us, Pampa Sarovar, it was at that time a very large lake, a very holy place. And on the banks of this lake, as we explained yesterday, Shabari was living. And even today, you may have already been there (if not after the lecture, just there are the caves, the cave of Shabari) if you want to experience what's it like to be in a cave, its quiet spacious five-star cave. A long, long time ago she performed her tapasya there. After Shabari-- where we are sitting-- worshipped Rama after waiting for him in great anticipation for many, many years, with his blessings, by his grace, she attained the highest perfection. And Hanuman came down from Rishimukhya Mountain in the guise of a brahman and introduced himself. When Rama heard beautiful poetic speech of Hanuman

which was invested with such pure unalloyed devotion, such a selfless spirit to serve, Rama was very pleased and it was here at Pampa Sarovar that the connection of the hearts of Hanuman and Rama was first truly manifested forever. Upon Hanuman seeing Rama, even though he didn't know who he was, his heart over-flooded with love, with surrender. What is that love and surrender? How does it manifest? With a willingness to serve. The purpose of service is to please the object of our service.

samsidhir hari toshnam

Lord Hari steals the heart of one who puts the first priority of life in serving with the will to please. This is the essence of humility and humility is the essence of the service attitude. When we take ourselves out of the centre of our life, it's so easy. The whole world is oriented toward the powers of ego, ahankar to put yourself in the centre.

janasya moho 'yam aham mameti

When we can see ourselves as our body and that which is in relationship to the body is mine). But bhakti is to put Krishna or Sri Rama in the center. That means I orchestrate every aspect of life in such a way that I could give happiness to my beloved Lord. Happiness, distress, honor, dishonor, pleasure, pain, life, death, they are all beautiful if they are endured for the purpose of seva, giving pleasure to Krishna.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, great Vaishnava saint, he prayed, "My dear Lord the inconveniences and even apparent suffering that I undergo to serve you and to please you are the sources of great happiness in my life. Because pleasure and pain and all of these dualities will come and go like the winter and summer seasons inevitably.

tams titiksasva bharata.

Sustainable happiness is not when its dependent on those dualities, it's when its dependent on our will to express our love through seva and Krishna is pleased with our seva and that's our happiness. Whether I am living or dying, if I am pleasing Krishna, that's my highest happiness because that's ananda or the nature of the soul.

Conveys the Danger of Distraction

Pampa Sarovar represents this to us. It is the place where Hanumanji first manifested the surrender of his heart to Lord Sri Rama. Laxmana told Hanuman here at Pampa Sarovar the story of Rama's life, his exile and the abduction of Sita and Hanuman explained briefly about Sugriva and it was here that he put Rama and Laxmana on his two shoulders and jumped to the top of Rishimukhya Mountain. In our talk yesterday, we discussed up to the point where the monsoon rainy seasons had just ended and several weeks passed and Rama was still waiting, but Sugriva became very infatuated and intoxicated by all the luxuries that he was deprived of for many years, and he was distracted. Can you imagine, even in the association of Hanuman! Even when Rama was, where we were yesterday at Malyavanta sitting in a cave yearning, crying every moment like millions of years waiting for the rains to end so that they could start searching for Sita! But he was so distracted that he forgot all about it and even if he remembered, there were so many nice things all around him that he really didn't remember. It was just something at the back of his mind. Sometimes in our sadhana, in our duties or seva, we become distracted. Even in the best association we can be distracted if we are not very careful.

The Search for Sita Begins

But Hanuman reminded him, and Laxmana really reminded him. He was very angry. The arrangements were made where they would begin their search and Rama gave Hanuman his own ring with his name on it because it was Sugriva who actually sent Hanuman in the southern direction with Angad, Jambavana and others. Sugriva was saying to Hanumanji, "I know you are the one who is going to find Sita." And Rama heard that and he, he walked up to Hanuman and gave Hanuman his own personal ring. I have this confidence that by your determination to please me that you will find Sita. Just to prove to her that

you are my messenger, give her my ring. They began the search. Sugriva ordered four divisions of vanars, who went in North, South, East and West, that they have to return within one month and they had to find Sita. A month had passed. Those who went to the North, West and the East, they had already returned but Hanumans' group, headed by Angad, the son of Bali, they still had not returned. The others explained to Sugriva and then to Rama, "We searched everything, everywhere, but we could not find."

They were so thorough, they were going to the towns, to the cities, to the villages, they were going in every cave, practically to every house, they were looking everywhere, so thorough. They had to find Ravana and bring back Sita but they could not find. Six weeks passed. Hanuman, Angad, they were still looking. They came to one place where there was no food and there was no water. They were literally on the verge of death. They became so weak and just then, out from a cave they saw some birds flying and birds had water on them. So they realized that's water in the cave. So they all went in a line. There were lots of these monkey soldiers. They were holding each other's tails because it was really dark in this cave. They were walking, each one holding the person in front of their tail. They walked long distance in this cave. They had screeching of birds and bats flying in and out but they could not see anything and suddenly after a distance in this cave they came upon what appeared like paradise. It was illuminated by golden trees and on these trees there were such wonderful fruits and there was lakes and waterfalls and fountains and so much food, they were everywhere. There were elegant jewels, gold and silver, the monkeys were really astounded, "Where are we, what is this?!" And suddenly in the midst of the most incredible luxury, there was an ascetic woman. Hare Krishna. She just wearing tree bark, she was very thin, she was meditating, performing tapasya. Hanuman approached her and asked, "Who are you, where are we, what is this?" She introduced herself as Svayampraha and she explained the history of that place. Maya, he was the architect for the asuras, the demons and he resided in that cave. He designed everything. Before he left, he gave residence a celestial heavenly lady named Hema. And Svayampraha explained that Hema was my best friend and after she left, she gave charge of this place to me. She said, "Please drink as much water as you like and eat these fruits and herbs and they will completely satisfy you." So they were very happy. It was like by the grace of Rama and they were completely rejuvenated but then she told them that there is certain rule here, anyone who come here, if they try to leave, they will die. Now it was a nice place to stay but Sita was captive somewhere in the world. They had no idea where by Ravana and Rama was in the cave in Malyavanta here in Kirshkinta crying, "We have to get out and find her!" The ascetic woman understood this. She told them, "Close your eyes, If you try leaving you will die but by my ascetic power, I will chant the mantra and transfer you outside." So they close their eyes and she chanted some mantras and by her mystic yogic powers, they found themselves, along with her, outside the cave and she blessed them.

They continued their search everywhere. They had no clue where to go and finally, after it was weeks passed, the month already ended, Anagad, the son of Bali, because again they were very hungry and very thirsty, he said, 'We can't find her, we don't know where else to look and Sugriva he is going to kill me if I return without any news of Sita!' and the others were expressing the same thing. So Angad said, we are disappointed, we have failed in our mission. The time is up and we have no news. Angad said, "I am going to stay here and fast till death." And except for Jambavana and Hanuman, who were saying, "No No, we should continue looking", all the others following Angad decided to fast till death because they couldn't bare coming back and seeing Rama and disappointing. So they were fasting, they were actually dying and as they were lying there, just lying in rows, from above in a mountain a gigantic bird, like a vulture with no wings, he was really old, he came out and he saw all these big monkeys laying down, fasting till death and he spoke so that everyone could hear him: "I am also very hungry, it seems like you are gonna fast till death, after you die I will eat you." Angad, seeing this massive bird, he was thinking that

we failed. Ravana stole Sita, we don't know where he is and even the great bird Jatayu, like us he tried to protect Sita but he failed, he was killed by Ravana! When this big bird heard this, he said, "did you speak the name Jatayu? I happened to be Jatayu's elder brother." He asked Angada to tell the whole story. When he heard that Jayatu had died trying to protect Sita from Ravana, Angada told him the whole story. (Should I tell it briefly?) Just outside of Nasik or Panchavati, there is Sita Harana, it's a holy place even today, we should have yatra there once again. Rama and Sita and Laxmana were living there and it was there that Ravana disguised himself as a sadhu, a holy man, because he knew that Sita was very fond of serving holy people. And Marich. who was a mystic yogi, changed his form to most incredible beautiful deer and Sita knowing that their fourteen years in exile only had a couple of years left, She said to Rama (actually only about a year is left) She said, "wouldn't it be nice to bring back deer back to Ayodhya with us?! We can make him happy and it will make everybody so happy. Please bring that deer back." Rama told Laxmana, "You stay here with Sita." Because Dandakaranaya forest was a very, very dangerous place. So he went out to catch the deer and then the deer cried out in a loud voice exactly with Rama's voice, "Laxmana save me, help me!!" And Sita said Laxmana, "Go help!!" And Laxaman said, "No that's a demon named Marichi and he has taken the form of this deer and he is pretending to be Rama just to allure me away so something could happen to you." And Sita, she was so much emotional, "My husband!!!, My beloved Rama is in danger, go, go!!!" And he said, "I will not go." She said, "Is it that you came on this trip just waiting for this moment when you would be alone with me and Rama would be away so that you could enjoy me?! I will not allow you to do this, I will take my life." Laxmana said, "How could I- I have never ever looked above your feet! I would never do such a thing." Sita said, "Then go and find, help Rama!" Laxaman is heartbroken, he went to find Rama and it was at that time that Ravana stole Sita away by force and as he was going ahead, because he was a mystic who could fly, he had a chariot, that was going through the air.

The Lord and his Devotee's Intimacy

Jatayu who was really old, who was a beloved devotee of Rama, He heard Sita's voice crying out, "Jatayu please tell Rama what happened to me but don't try to help yourself, you are too old, you will die." But when Jatayu saw the helpless condition of Sita, he could not just sit there in his old age and watch it happen. Yes it was for sure that he would die if he tried to help, but he would rather die than do nothing. He challenged Ravana to a battle and he jumped off and he really fought. He destroyed Ravana's chariot, started beating and beating and beating Ravana. Ravana was screaming in pain. The fight went on and on for hours and hours and but ultimately, because of his age, he became extremely tired and, taking advantage of the situation, Ravana with his sword, cut off his wings and he fell to the ground bleeding.

Unable to stand up, Sita ran up to him and embraced Jatayu, crying, "Such a devotee you are, you were willing to die for me, I bless you, I pray for you." And then Ravana came and grabbed Sita and took her away. Sometime later when Rama and Laxmana discovered that Sita was gone, they didn't know where she went or what happened. They were asking the trees, the sun, the moon, the animals, the insects where is Sita and some deer, simple little lotus eyed deers, they looked in the south east direction and Rama understood, that's where they went. And he followed that direction and ultimately found his beloved devotee Jatayu laying in the pool of his own blood. He also saw the broken chariot of Ravana and Jatayu explained to Rama exactly what happened, "It was Ravana, the king of rakshas, that has stolen Sita! And they have gone in this direction." Rama put the head of Jatayu in his lap, and embraced him. He told Jatayu, "Because you have given your life for me, I promise you on this very day, I will grant you the highest perfection of liberation, prema bhakti, ecstatic love for me. And on this day you will be my eternal servant in the spiritual world." Jatayu, looking up at Rama's beautiful lotus face, chanted his holy names, and Rama took his soul back to the spiritual world, Vaikuntha. Rama started to cry. He said

“The death of my father Dasratha and even the loss of Sita is not paining my heart as much as the loss of such devotee as Jatayu from this world.” The feelings of separation on the spiritual platform are something very intimate and sweet. “In order to serve my beloved Sita, he gave his life. How could I ever repay him? How could I ever forget him? How could I live without the association of such a devotee?”

Jatayu’s Glories

Angada told this story to this big bird and then the big bird, he said, “My name is Sampathi, I am the elder brother of Jatayu. I have not seen him for so many long years. This is the first news I have heard of him. He gave his life in the service of Rama!” Sampathi was crying for his brother. And then he told his own story, how when he was very young, he and his younger brother, Jatayu, were flying in the air. And they were so empowered, they could go anywhere they wanted, they were flying higher and higher into the sky to the heavenly world and they became very close to the sun. Jatayu, his little brother, he was exhausted; he was being burnt by the sun. Sampathi, who wanted to protect his brother, he flew over his head and shielded him with his wings, and in doing so Sampathi’s wings were totally burnt and scorched and they fell off, to protect his brother. And Sampathi came falling down to where he was there. It was a forest near a hermitage of a great sage named Chandrama. And Sampathi, from that day, he never saw Jatayu again and he never heard anything about where he was or what happened. He went to the rishi Chandrama and explained to him what happened, “Save my brother! I have no wings, I can’t do anything!” and the sage told him that, “By my yogic powers I could give you wings back but I am not going to do it. Because that will deprive you of a service. Many years from now, the devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead– Bhagavan, who will descend in this world as Rama, by my yogic powers and devotion, I know that Rama will come and when he descends to this world, his wife Sita will be stolen and his devotees, who will be in the form of monkeys, they will come here searching for Sita. And you will tell them where she is. Because by your incredible vision, you’ll be able to see where she is. When you serve the servants of Rama, you will attain the perfection of life. And Rama will be so pleased with you being the servant of his servants in this very, very special way, at that moment your wings will grow back.” He told this story. Sampathi, he said, “Even though I can’t fly, I have been waiting here for you for 8000 years. And I can’t fly and I can’t go anywhere! My son was bringing me food for a while but now even he is gone! So I have just been living in this cave, helplessly, just waiting for the servants of Rama to come so that I can perfect my life in devotion.” He said, “But my eyes are still fully powerful and I am seeing there is an ocean, the southern ocean. And across 800 miles away, I see an island called Sri Lanka. In the center of this island there is a mountain named Trikuta and on the peak this mountain is the palace of Ravana. It’s a huge place with huge grounds. And I see there is a garden of ashok trees, and there under a tree, is Sita. Crying in separation, she is emaciated, she practically refuses to eat and drink anything constantly meditating and chanting the holy names of Sri Rama.”

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare.

He said that, “By the mercy of Lord Rama, one could easily cross over the vast limitless ocean of birth and death. So by the mercy of your beloved Lord Rama, you will certainly be able to cross over this little 800-mile ocean. I bless you to have all success.” And with a grateful and loving heart when he gave that information, magnificent wings sprouted from his body, he became youthful again, and he smiled and he resounded with loud voice, another benediction upon all the monkeys and he flew in the air.

Hanuman’s Empowerment

So now they knew where exactly where Sita was. But how to cross 800 miles ocean? Angada, who was the leader, he said, “I could jump across the ocean 800 miles but I don’t think I have the power to get back.” and Jambavana said, “You are the leader, you

shouldn't be the one who does it, somebody else should do it." and Angada said, "Can anyone else get the message of Rama to Sita?" And each of the powerful monkeys was expressing the extent of their abilities. One said, "I could jump 10 yojanas, [that's about 80 miles], but that's as far as I could go." Someone else said, "I could jump 30 yojanas!" Another said, "I could jump 50 yojanas!" but nobody could jump 800 miles and then back, that's 1600 miles. So there was a dilemma. Jambavana, he said, "When I was young I could do it but now I am very old too." He looked over Hanuman, who was very humble just sitting in meditation and prayer, *how to get Rama's message to Sita*. At that time, Jambavana said to Hanuman, He said, "You can easily do this!" And then he reminded Hanuman of his life and his childhood in front of all the others! He explained how Hanuman was born, and how when he was just a little baby, he jumped to the sun! And he actually already made it practically to the sun planet with a desire to eat the sun! And then Indra stopped him. And because of that thunderbolt of Indra touching on his chin, he went unconscious. And vayu stopped the air of the universe, and all the various devas gave benediction to Hanuman. But the sages gave another benediction, that he would forget all the blessings he has and all his powers unless he is reminded. He [Jambavana] said, "All these years Hanuman, no one has reminded you." Hanuman could have single handedly helped Sugriva and vanquished Bali but he didn't remember his strength. Jambavana said, "Hanuman, these are the different benedictions that various devas have bestowed upon you." and when Hanuman heard this, he understood with total confidence that there is nothing that he could not do without the grace of Rama. And he roared, "I will cross the ocean!" And all of the great vanaras, headed by Angada, were cheering and cheering! Hanumanji climbed to the top of mountain Mahendra and then he expanded himself to very, very large size. And Jambavana blessed him, "Now go and give the message of Rama to Sita!" With folded palms, Hanumanji offered a prayer to his beloved Lord Rama. As we spoke yesterday, Rama got the order to do all the incredible things he did from Sugriva and Jambavana. Even the most intimate, celebrated, immortal servant of Rama, in his heart, was always in the mood of servant of the servant of the servant of the servant. He shouted out, he roared, "Jai Shri Rama!" Hanuman still lives here. So let us say it in such a way that he is very happy with us. "Jai Sri Rama.!!" 10 million times louder please. "Jai Sri Rama!!!" Again please. "Jai Shri Rama!!!" Hearing Hanumanji roare, all the monkey raised their arms... Jai Sri Rama!!!

Hanuman Sets Out for Sita

With his palms folded in a prayerful, heartfelt mood of saranagati, (total surrender), Hanuman jumped. He expanded himself to a large size. Being the son of Vayu, and the son of Siva, what could he not do? The force and the power of his leap, the whole mountain, it's a giant mountain, it started going into the ground. And the force of his foot on the mountain put so much of pressure in the mountain, that all the trees and the animals and insects, the snakes under ground, they all started coming out- what's happening, what's happening- and Hanuman leapt through the air and the velocity of the wind that was behind him because of the force of his body, is the trees were being uprooted from the mountain following behind him, completely immersed in this dasyabhav, in his love in the spirit of a servant of servant of Sri Rama.

He was soaring through the sky. Even the demigods were astounded. They wanted to glorify Hanuman. They also wanted to prepare him because going to Lanka was going to be an incredible, inconceivable challenge. Here is Ravana, kumbhakarana, Indrajit ,Vrihastha ,the most powerful rakhasha demons by the millions all living together and everything in the whole Lanka was directed toward satisfying Ravana's desires. And he had only one desire, to enjoy Sita. And Hanuman was, all alone, *going there*, so the devas approached. Actually first, the Lord of the ocean, he wanted to do some service for Hanuman, das das anudas. Because he was already flying for so many miles, he was half way across the ocean, 400 miles, he needed some rest. When you are going off the ocean. There was a mountain, the Menka Mountain. This Menaka Mountain was underneath the

ocean. It was in the water. Actually its an incredible thing, there are many huge mountains in the ocean, some of the mountains in the oceans are actually larger than the mountains on land. We just can't see them. So Varuna dev appealed to Menaka to rise out of the ocean, to be a resting place for Hanuman. This gigantic mountain with golden peak emerged from the ocean and Menaka personified himself as like a human being and he stood before the Hanuman way way up in the sky and said, "I have come to provide you a resting place." And Hanuman was really grateful, but he was so enthusiastic, "Sita is in such a deplorable situation and my beloved Rama is in Kishkinda Kshetra, in a cave, waiting for some news- I can't waste a moment." He said, "I accept your service but, I cannot waste any time." So to honor the offering, with his hand he touched the mountain and kept flying. This is an important principle.

Time is so precious. Srila Prabhupada quotes Chanakya pundit that even one moment lost cannot be bought back by all the wealth in the world. Therefore time is the most precious thing we have.

And these concepts are even catching on the material level. These business managers they say, "Time is money" because how you spend your time, is how you are going to you are your money or lose your money, whatever it is but, *athato brahma jijnasa, manushyanam sahasreshu Kaschid yatati sidhaye. Bhagavad-Gita* explains that human life is so rare. Out of thousands of people, hardly one even endeavors for life perfection and out of those few that endeavor, it's very difficult to know the Lord because we cannot know Krishna by our own efforts. We can only know Krishna by Krishna's grace, by Radha's grace which comes through her devotees. Through that grace, Krishna reveals himself to us. Hanumanji, we cannot imitate him. Go ahead and try. How many of you today climbed up to the top of the Anjana Parvat? So you know what it's like to climb a mountain. Hanumanji, he was born up. When he was infant child he could jump from the top to the bottom within seconds. So we cannot imitate great souls but, *mahajano yena gatah sa panthah*, but they teach us by their examples the most essential truth. And unless we follow in the footsteps of the examples, there is no other way to spiritual enlightenment. They teach us how to please the Lord. Hanuman was the perfection of dasya, the devotional principle of rendering service, selfless service and he wanted to teach us through this pastime how precious every moment is. The six goswamis Rupa Gosvami, Raghunatha das Gosvami, Sanatana Gosvami, Gopal Bhatt Gosvami, Jiva Gosvami, Raghunatha Bhatt Gosvami, they hardly slept one to one and a half hours a day and sometimes they just didn't have time to even do that because they were so enthusiastic to serve. They didn't want to waste a moment. They were constantly chanting Krishna's names, writing books about Krishna, discussing Krishna about one another, excavating holy places, discovering the places of Krishna's lilas, doing seva for their deities. With every moment we are getting closer to death. *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, there is a beautiful verse, with every rising and setting of the sun, we are one day closer to inevitable death but those who utilize these precious moments in understanding how valuable they are, to engage those moments in remembering Krishna and serving Krishna, with every rising and setting of the sun such a person is one day closer to eternal life. And the easiest way, that Hanuman taught us and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu broadcasted to the world, the easiest way to remember the Lord is to chant his holy name. *nama cintamani krsna caitanya rasa vigraha*

The Glories of the Humble Position (Suras Lila)

The Supreme Personality of Godhead has many, many names and each of these names, he is personally present with all of his potencies, his beauty and his grace. The devas wanted to prepare Hanuman and show the world who is this Hanuman. So they approached the mother of the nagas, her name: Suras. She came from the ocean and she appeared like a big rakshasa and she said to Hanuman, she came out of the oceans and into the sky and placed herself right in front of Hanuman as he was flying and she said,

"You cannot pass by me, I have received a benediction from Lord Brahma that no one can come by me without me eating them. So today you are my food and there is nothing you could do." And she opened her mouth to swallow Hanuman. Hanuman expanded his body to be really big and Suras expanded her body to be even bigger, her mouth, he became a mile high and Suras's mouth became 2 miles wide and it kept getting bigger and bigger no matter what he did. Her mouth was practically covering the sky and Hanuman, he instantly reduced the size to be the tip of a thorn and he went into Suras mouth and walked around for a while and then he came out and then he stood before her and said, "The blessing of Brahma has been fulfilled, you ate me but I am a servant of Rama and I am doing the service of Rama. So please bless me to continue" And Suras became a beautiful woman then and she said, "Hanumanji, you are very intelligent. I have come on the behalf of the demigods just to inspire you. Now I give all blessings, go and perform your service to Sita." Hanuman was travelling through the sky with great determination and suddenly in the middle of the sky he could not move. There was a rakshasi. She was really a rakshasi, evil, envious. Lets go back to Suras, a lesson there, she was making herself bigger, bigger, bigger. Hanuman was making himself bigger, bigger, bigger. Ultimately he made himself very small.

"You see when we humble ourselves, we can overcome all obstacles because maya is like that Suras, she is all devouring.

daivi hy esa guna-mayi mama maya duratyaya

We cannot overcome the powers of maya. The power of lust, envy, anger, greed, illusion are beyond any human capacity. They are beyond the capacity of a conditioned jiva. But Krishna tells in Gita that he is the controller of material energy, if we can take shelter of him, we can cross beyond everything."

In fact, the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* explains that trying to resist the powers of maya is like an ordinary little person trying to swim across a shoreless ocean. Now there are many Olympic swimmers and everything but have you heard of anyone who has swam across the Pacific Ocean? No one ever tried its possible, and these are the greatest athletes who have medals. The ocean of material existence is infinitely greater than the pacific ocean, with infinitely more dangers, but when we take shelter of the grace of God, of Krishna, *Bhagavatam* says that by the grace of Lord, that ocean reduces to the amount of water contained in the hoof prints of a small calf and even a small child can jump over it.

*trinad api sunicena taror api sahishnuna
amanina manadena kirtaniyah sada harihi*

Draupadi, when Durasan was trying to tear her sari off from her, she looked at her husbands, the Pandavas and Bhima was also a son of Vayu. See, Hanuman didn't have a wife but Bhima had a wife. Even Bhima wanted to help her but Yudhisthira said, "no, no, we cannot do." She turned to Dhristrar, she turned to everyone, She tried with her own powers. Material existence is like Durasana, so much greater than ourselves. And ultimately Draupadi completely humbled herself and put her arms in the air, in total humility and helpless surrender, she cried out the holy names: *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare | Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare ||*

And Krishna came to help her. So in our path of Krishna consciousness and bhakti, humility is the essence. And like Hanuman, he was supremely humble, but his humility didn't make him afraid or lazy, he was fearless, he was determined. That's the symptom of true humility. It doesn't disempower us, it empowers us with the infinite grace of God.

So he made himself very small and overcame Suras, who is, in this sense, the ego that wants to make itself bigger and bigger and bigger. But now, he is flying by and he can't move and he looks down and he sees this rakshasi named Simika. She had the mystic power where she could actually control people by holding on to their shadows. So the sun

was there, it was daytime and Hanumanji was flying and his shadow was on the ocean and she grabbed his shadow and he couldn't move. And after she captured him, she opened her mouth to eat him and Hanumanji, he again became very small and jumped in her mouth and dove right down in her throat. While he was inside, he expanded himself, and with his nails he ripped open her heart. He went right down to her heart and went to her kidneys and lungs and all her others, she was dead. She opened her mouth and Hanuman flew out and then she fell into the sea. Simika represents this egoistic tendency to find faults with others. She grabbed on to Hanuman's shadow, the dark side. Similarly even the great personalities, people want to find faults with them, what to speak of people who actually have faults.

The symptom of a true devotee is that they have no tendency to find faults with other. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu in Caitanya Bhagavat, he declared that I will personally liberate with highest perfection anyone who just do two things. Always chant Krishna's names and do not criticize others.

But this tendency to find faults with others is simply the symptom of ahankar or false ego. When we are actually enjoying and finding great happiness in Krishna's infinite glories we don't have any tendency to find fault with others. We want to share those glories and see the good in everyone because everyone is a part of Krishna. But if we do find a fault, it's like a doctor. A doctor sees a disease with compassion to cure a person.

The ego wants to find fault just to show that I am better; to beat somebody down, to put myself up. That's completely conflicting to the principle of devotion. When a devotee sees fault in others, it's with compassion, to lift that person up or to protect others from that condition. But Simika was very eager to grab and exploit the shadow. So, following in the footsteps of Hanuman, we have to overcome this fault finding tendencies.

And he continued his journey. Ultimately he came to Sri Lanka. He saw what a magnificent place, it was like a jewelled island surrounded by the oceans on all sides and he landed and decided that he would wait until the night time to enter Sri Lanka. He was looking. He saw it was protected by huge walls, and Hanuman saw on the walls there were millions of gigantic *raksha* soldiers with the most deadly weapons, constantly running about looking at every inch to make sure things were safe. And he saw that between the walls, there were these enormous motes of water and in some of the water you have to swim across it. They were literally filled, swarming, not just with little lizards, but the most venomous snakes and lizards. And there were gigantic man-eating crocodiles and man-eating fish; nobody could possibly cross it and live it.

So Hanuman waited till night time and the sun was setting and he decided to make himself very small. He was still Hanuman. Did all of you at Anjanaya Parvat see that Hanuman deity, sitting in the lap of Anjana, his mother? He became like that. He took the size like the little kitty cat and he approached the wall, the outer wall entrance in the northern side of Sri Lanka. And there was a gigantic rakshasini named Lankini, she was the protectress of Sri Lanka and she saw Hanuman, he was very small and she started blasting him. "I have a benediction of Brahma that nobody could cross me!" And Hanuman was trying to be really respectful and nice to her. He explained what his mission was and she was so rude and cruel and harsh, she took her hand and slapped Hanuman and said, "On this day, I am going to kill you!" And Hanuman gently punched her, very gently. Because if he would have gave any seriousness to it, she would have been finished. And she fell on the ground. Then she got up and she was really happy. She said, "I have been waiting for this day. Brahma told me that someday a monkey is going to hit and you are going to fall on the ground and on that day you should know that Sri Lanka is going to be destroyed." And she said to Hanumanji, "I offer you my obeisances and to your beloved Lord Rama. Now I bless you. Go and perform your mission in Sri Lanka."

Ravana's Riches

And little Hanuman, he jumped over the walls, he entered Lanka. He could not believe what he was seeing. There was no place on earth, even in the heavens it's very rare to see anything so elegant and opulent as what Ravana has created.

He had plundered the riches of the greatest kings on earth and even Indra and the devas of higher planet and brought the choices of their wealth to Lanka. The palaces, the walls, they were primarily made of pure solid gold and decorated with limitless quantities of ivory, silver, emeralds, diamonds, rubies, crystal beautiful parks with flowering fragrant trees. And he was seeing these monstrous rakshas everywhere and it was night time. Some of them were wrestling with each other. There was certain kind of rakshasa who were brahmans rakshasas and they were in temples constantly; 24 hours a day they were reading, not reading, they were chanting, reciting Vedic mantras and performing yajnas, meditating and doing pujas and mudras and tantras and yantras and mantras. All to bring blessings to Ravana, to protect him and give him power, and happiness. That was the focus of everyone. Hanuman was looking for Sita. He was seeing, he ultimately came to Ravana's personal palace. Ravana's palace was 8 miles long and 4 miles wide and it was the most luxurious place on earth. The Ramayana goes in great detail, of what kind of luxury were there in the palace but I am not going to get into detail because I think you are hungry. This world is so nice. If someone comes to you with the most precious diamond in the world, but you are hungry, will that diamond give you any happiness? You can't eat diamonds, you can sell it to get money but if you are in the middle of Kishkinta Keshetra, you just want some Prasad. I understand. Hanuman was seeing such elegance to live like this and he entered into Ravana's palace.

And most beautiful females, Ravana had kidnapped tens and thousands of the daughters of demigods, celestial apsaras, the daughters of great, great rishis and sages and ultimately they all surrendered to him to give him pleasure. Everywhere around, he saw gigantic rakshasas totally intoxicated, enjoying with these apsaras and in Ravana's court, some were playing beautiful music. And he came to this incredible bed made out of crystal and in the center of it was an ivory platform and in that was laying Ravana and around him there were thousands of beautiful ladies and finest foods were spread out everywhere and so many intoxicating beverages. Everyone was drunk but it was not the kind of drunk like they do in Mumbai, that stuff is not worth anything. This is heavenly intoxicants. It really gives and pleasure and power, the other stuff is just the mode of ignorance, this is also the mode of ignorance but it really gives. Ravana was a kind of asura, the finest intoxicant, he stole it from heavenly worlds. So they were just laying there and Ravana was sleeping. At that time he only had one head and two arms because he could change his form according to his will. And Hanuman looked at Ravana. He was thinking, *he is so strong and he is so beautiful, he is so charismatic, if he was only pious, a devotee, he could be the Lord of the entire heavenly and earthly world and God will give him all powers and all blessings but somehow or the other he was envious and all the incredible blessings and boons he had received, they all were utilized for wrong purpose.* Hanuman was not attracted by the riches; he was not attracted by the beauty of the most elegant, enchanting women in the universe. He was just looking for Sita. Beside Ravana on another bed was Mandodri, his wife, his principle queen. She was far more beautiful than anyone else and at first Hanuman was thinking that maybe this is Sita but because she was wearing beautiful jewels and fine clothes and she was sleeping with a smile on her face, Hanuman understood that Sita would never do this in the separation of Rama. He looked palace after palace everywhere, hour after hour, he could not find Sita and he was thinking in his heart, *how could I go back to Rama? I can't, I can't face him and tell him that I could not find her.* And then he saw an incredible garden, giant garden. It was the Ashok van and in that garden, he went inside and he saw, he actually climbed a tall tree to look down and he saw a big crowd of rakshasis. Now Ravana was so strategic in his

planning. He had the most beautiful ladies in the universe with him to enjoy, but he also empowered certain rakshasis who were the most ugly things that you could imagine. They were so fearful. They had all kinds of animal heads and claws and sharp teeth and there is great description of what these rakshasis look like. They were crowded around Sita praising Ravana, and Hanuman first saw Sita, she was very thin, she had not bathed and practically eaten anything for so many months. She was laying in the ground, surrounded by people harassing her, crying out Rama's holy names. Hanuman understood that this is Sita. He was so deeply moved by her chastity and purity and her complete absorption in remembering Rama in separation. The sun rose and Hanuman heard from a little distant place, musicians singing beautiful poetic songs to wake up Ravana. He woke up, he was all disheveled from the night before, he took his bath, he put on perfumes, he combed his hair, he put on nice clothes and immediately went to Sita. He was thinking of Sita twenty four hours a day and there was a whole entourage of beautiful ladies and guards and soldiers following him as he marched into Ashok van. And Hanuman was still in his kitty cat form of a monkey size and he was in a tree, hiding behind the leaves watching. Ravana was so majestic.

Sita's Unbreakable Chastity

He came to Sita and spoke such poetic flattering romantic words to her. He was praising her beauty, he was praising her limbs and glorifying her character: "I am willing to live and I am willing to die for you. I will make you the principle queen of the entire world, you will live and all my other queens will all be your maid servant. I will focus my whole heart for you only. You have captivated my mind. I have given my heart to you. My love, accept me as your husband and be happy forever." Sita would not even look at him. She just looked at the ground and condemned him: "My heart belongs to Rama. Rama is like a lion and you are like a miserable jackal. Beg forgiveness from Rama, return me to Rama and Rama will give you all blessings and empower you, otherwise you will be destroyed." She would not even look at him. And Ravana was speaking so many sweet romantic words to her but ultimately she said you are just like a coward. Ravana said, "If you do not surrender to me within the next month, I vow that I will have my cooks chop you into pieces, cook you and I will eat you for my breakfast. What is this Rama? He is not worthy of you. You are the most elegant princess in all the creation. Rama was such a coward, he was exiled into the forest and he didn't even fight for his rights. And now he is wondering around like a hermit in the forest, what can he give you? Sita put a piece of grass between herself and Ravana, would not look at him. Ravana was so angry, he ordered the Rakshasis, "By any means convince her to surrender to me!" Then he roared in great anger being insulted by Sita and marched away. The rakshasis were really harassing and she was just lying in the ground, crying out the holy names of Rama.

Hanuman was so joyful, he actually found Sita but he was also in terrible agony to see the pitiable condition of Sita being exploited and harassed in separation of Rama. He was gonna go down and start fighting those rakshasis but he was thinking, *If I do then there will be a great conflict here and I won't be able to get my message to Sita.* So he was just quietly hiding behind a tree in a tiny form, watching, and as these rakshasis, these evil people, were torturing (emotionally) Sita. Srijata was one incredibly devoted lady. She came out and she told all these others, "I had a dream. In my dream I saw Rama victorious with Sita. They are blazing in enlightenment like fire, wearing jewels and fine robes and I saw Ravana, dead with blood all around him being pulled by a wagon of donkeys." Hare Krishna.

Hanuman Pacifies Sita

So, this sobered those ladies and they went to tell Ravana about this dream. And they all kind of went to sleep because it was morning, they would stay up all night then they will go to sleep in day. So Sita was sitting all alone and Hanumanji, he was very concerned that if he came before Sita, she might think that he is disguising himself but he was

actually Ravana. So from a secret place, in a very sweet voice, he sang the glories of Lord Rama. He began to describe every limb of the beautiful transcendental body of Sri Rama. He told the story of his birth and his childhood pastimes and his wonderful pastimes with Kaushalya and Dasratha and he talked about going to the forest with Visvamitra muni and first meeting Sita and in Mithila, marrying Sita and coming back to Ayodhya with her and then being exiled into the forest.

He was telling the beautiful stories of living in the forest at Chitrakuta with Sita and going to Dandakaranya and Nashik and how Lord Sri Rama was now in Malyavanta hill in a cave in Kishkinta yearning and longing to find Sita and how he Hanuman had jumped over the entire ocean as Rama's messenger just to give confidence and hope to Sita. He was telling all these stories. He revived the heart of Sita. For the first time in almost a year, she was hearing the glories of Rama; otherwise all she heard was blasphemy, criticism and condemnation. And she looked around, *who is speaking these things, who is speaking?* And she saw in a tree behind the bushes, a tiny little monkey, and he was smiling. And she looked at him and he jumped down and he came in front of her. Immediately Sita said, "You are Ravana, you have taken this form just to trick me!" and Hanuman, he spoke with such love. Sita understood that "By the countenance of your face and the sweetness of the love of your words I could understand that you truly are the servant of Rama." Hanumanji told the whole story and then from his cloth, he presented to Sita, the ring inscribed with the name of Rama, and told, "From that mountain cave in Kishkinta, Lord Sri Rama, in great love, removed this ring from his finger and presented it to me to give it to you." When Sita held the ring at her hand, she pressed it to her head, pressed it to her heart, she cried and cried and cried in ecstasy. She was feeling Rama's presence in such a special way in that ring. Hanuman then told Sita a story. He said, "Rama shared this with me. He told me that no one else in all the world knows this story except you and him. When you were returning from Mithila to Ayodhya after your marriage, you were sitting next to each other and Lord Rama touched your feet with his feet. And Rama's feet are soft and elegant like lotus flowers, but when he touched your foot, your foot turned red because your lotus feet are so much more soft and delicate than even his. Do you remember that? And when you were going through Dandakaranya forest, barefoot walking over stones and shrubs and thorns, Rama was reminding of that incident of how he was appreciating your sacrifice for him, that you were willing to walk barefoot for 14 years in the forest with him despite having such soft and sensitive, delicate feet." Sita wept. Hanuman said, "Get on my shoulders right now, I will take you back to Rama" And Sita said, "No I cannot do that." Hanuman said, "why? I will bring you back to Rama on this very day!" She said, "You are Hanuman, how can I get on you? You are so small." (Because he was still in little kitty cat size) She said, "I can't even fit on you." And then Hanuman expanded himself into a mountainous size and said, "Get on my back, I will send you back to Rama. I will personally carry you."

She said, "You are the son of Vayu, as you are flying over the ocean, I am not going to be able to hold on to you, the wind is going to be so great, I will fall into the ocean. And if you start flying away, all the rakshasas and Ravana and everybody will challenge you to fight and you will have to fight them all and how can you do that when I am on your back, on your shoulder? And besides that, my chastity to Rama, although I was forcibly grabbed by Ravana, I will not touch another man except Rama. And most importantly, for Rama's glory it is only be befitting that he personally rescues me." And Hanuman smiled and said, "yes." Then Sita took some beautiful jewels that she was hiding from Ravana. One particular jewel that was given to her by her father on the day she married Rama and put on her head and she gave that jewel to Hanuman to give to Rama and then she told a story that no one in the world knew except the two of them. Would you like to hear the story?

When they were in Chitrakut together, Rama and Sita, they were so happy. They were sitting on a rock on the banks of Mandakini-Ganga River, that rock is still there today. When we will go on a yatra to Chitrakut, we will visit that rock. In Chitrakut, it was so peaceful, Sita Rama lived together in the simplicity of the forest, just eating roots and herbs collected by Laxmana, living in simple little cottage made out of simple wooden leaves that Laxmana made. And she would collect flowers and bring it to the yogis and rishis and sages for their puja, it was like Vrindavana in Rama Lila. Sita expressed to Rama that: "The simplicity and the beauty of our life in Chitrakut is so much more enjoyable than life in Ayodhya, the big city, capital of the kingdom." One day they were sitting on this rock together and a crow landed on the rock. Meanwhile, Lord Ramacandra was sleeping on the lap of Sita and the crow, with his beak and his claws, started scratching Sita! And Sita was trying to shoo him away but she was not wanting to wake up Rama. And the crow kept scratching her and scratching her until she was bleeding and crow just wouldn't stop harassing her. And finally Rama woke up and he saw blood on Sita he was very angry; and he saw this crow. Rama knew who it was. It was Indra's son, Jayanta who took the form of a crow. So Rama, he took a single piece of grass and chanted a mantra and threw it at the crow and that piece of grass became an astra, a weapon, and it toward the crow and the crow flew away because he was the son of Indra, in a crow form, something like Durvasa muni with Ambarisa. He was flying to all corners of the world and all these different places and no matter where he was this piece of grass was always right behind him and so finally he came back to the rock on Mandakini Ganga in Chitrakut and the crow begged forgiveness from Rama. And Sita and Sita smiled at the crow and said to Rama, "Please forgive him." And Rama said, "I forgive him." He said to Jayanta, "I forgive you, but still when I throw a weapon, it has to do something." So the weapon touched his eye and he became blind in one eye, that was prasad. She told that story to Hanuman and said, "Please tell Rama." And she presented the jewel to him and she blessed Hanumanji and gave him one more message for Ramacandra. She said, "Please know that twenty fours a day, I don't even sleep, I am reciting your holy names within the core of my heart, I am meditating upon your beautiful form and your wonderful loving pastimes day and night but if you do not come within one month, it will be too late, Ravana will kill me, please come soon."

Hanuman's Unconditional Compassion

She blessed Hanumanji and Hanumanji, since he did his service, he fulfilled everything and more than Rama asked him to do but he wanted to do something extra. He understood that this Ashok Van was the favorite place of Ravana in the whole of Lanka. It was incredible, there were fountains and the most priceless trees from all over the universe were planted there, flowers twenty fours a day, twelve months a year were blooming, was just amazing. Hanuman, he destroyed the entire garden and all the beautiful buildings in it. And the rakshasis who were guarding it, they went and told Ravana. Ravana was very upset. He sent 80000 soldiers to kill this monkey that was disturbing his garden. Hanuman went to the gate entrance of the garden and sat on top of it waiting for Ravana's response. And there was one iron bar that was in the gate and he took that out, and that was all he had. The eighty thousand soldiers came and they were all-- they were monsters with the most sophisticated weapons trained to kill and they all had mystic yogic powers. I am not going to go into too many details, but Hanuman, with that one iron club, not even a club, a bar, he liberated all of them. When the news came to Ravana, he was even more angry. Jambumali was one of his greatest generals, he came charging on a big chariot with the entire army and it was really a good fight and ultimately with the iron bar that was taken right from Ravana's gate he destroyed the whole army and then smashed the head of Jambumali and he was liberated. Seven generals came, sent by Ravana. And Hanuman, with his feet and fist, defeated all of them.

Ravana sent his youngest son Aksha. Mandodri, the mother, she was begging Ravana: "don't send him! This monkey is not an ordinary monkey!!" But Ravana was convinced,

someone personally trained by him, born of his blood is undefeatable. And Aksha covered Hanumanji with arrows and Hanumanji grabbed Aksha by the legs, whirled him around, and threw him on the ground. He was liberated. Now Ravana became really disturbed. Meanwhile, Sita was watching from a distance, she was very happy, *this is my beloved Lord's servant*. Ravana sent Indrajit, his eldest son who had defeated Indra, the king of heaven, who was undefeatable. And who had the most enormous powers due to his austerities and the boons he received from devas. There was a great battle between Indrajit and Hanuman. And Hanuman decided, *I want to be captured by Indrajit because I want to give good katha to Ravana. I want to give this Rakshasa a chance to save himself and his whole dynasty before it's too late.*

He was actually. He, despite all the horrible things that Ravana had done, Hanuman was willing to give him a chance to rectify himself, that was the compassion of his heart as a vaishnava. Indrajit had a particular arrow and he chanted a mantra and empowered that arrow, a certain type of a naga. He shot the arrow and it created a rope, a snake rope around Hanuman's body, and Hanuman fell to the ground. Then Indrajit had his army pick up Hanuman, who appeared to be all bound up and helpless, and they brought him into the center court and put him in front of Ravana's throne, magnificent throne. Now Hanuman was face to face with Ravana. And Hanuman spoke after hearing the terrible words of Ravana [Which were,]: "Who are you? Why you have done this? What are you doing here?"

Hanuman said, "You saw what I did to your armies, to your generals and to your son. I am only the humble servant of the servant of the servant of Rama. I am his messenger to give you this message: release Sita and Rama will protect you forever, but if you persist in torturing her in this way, then he will come with an army of millions of monkeys as powerful as me to destroy you and your entire dynasty. Ravana, you are a coward, you distracted Rama and, when he was not there, you stole Sita away single handedly. Rama will destroy you and your entire dynasty– give Sita back." Ravana was so insulted by those words of Hanuman. He ordered his soldiers, "Kill this monkey."

Hanuman's Wrath

Vibhisana, the youngest brother of Ravana, jumped up. He said, "No, you cannot kill him, he is the messenger. According to the codes of dharma, you can punish a messenger but you cannot kill him." Ravana said, "He is not just a messenger, he killed my son, he destroyed my gardens, he killed hundreds and thousands of my soldiers." And Hanuman said, 'I am a monkey, its my nature to destroy gardens like this, and I was just doing my monkey nature and all your generals, your son and your armies, they came to kill me, it was self-defense." and Vibhisana was arguing really strongly with Ravana and finally, Ravana knew that Vibhisana always spoke the truth with wisdom in compassion and love for his elder brother. So finally, he said, "Alright, I will not outwardly kill him, but monkeys are very proud of their tails, light his tail on fire and, just to humiliate him while his tail is blazing with fire, march him, bound with ropes, through the streets of Lanka, so that everyone would laugh at him and after he is mutilated totally, if he does live, let him go." They took huge volumes of clothes and wrapped it around Hanuman's tail, then they soaked it in barrels and barrels of flammable oil and lit it on fire. And Hanumanji was still bound up with ropes and they took him to the streets of Lanka and were beating him and insulting him and Rakshasas were laughing at this monkey and at a certain point, Hanuman was thinking. Actually Sita was told by Vibhisana's wife what was happening with Hanuman. And Sita, out of her love for her servant, she prayed to agni, the god of fire that please do not cause any discomfort or burning to Hanuman, let that fire be cool and pleasing to him.

So here is Hanumanji, massive fire is pouring out from his tail directly and he is feeling it very cool, soothing experience. And he could immediately understand that it was Sita's

grace, she was praying for him. Now in that situation Hanuman was thinking, how can I serve Rama? This is bhakti. In whatever situation, how could I best serve?

He expanded himself and he made himself a little smaller and he jumped out of the ropes that was binding him. Then with his flaming tail, he started beating all the rakshasas that were around him and then he jumped on the top of the palace, and with his tail he touched it. The whole palace lit on fire.

And then, like a playful monkey he jumped to the roof of the next palace, to the next. Soon hundreds of buildings were blazing with fire and Hanuman was just playful jumping from one to another, very interesting.

When we try to cause harm to a great devotee of the Lord, that very thing comes back to harm us, that's the law of karma, for every action there is an equal, corresponding reaction. If we cause pain to another, that pain is going to come back to us and if that pain is caused to someone who is beloved by the Lord, which everyone is, especially those who are dedicating themselves to reciprocate with the Lord's love, then that pain is going to come back multiplied. The very fire that Ravana put on Hanuman's tail was now burning his entire kingdom to the ground.

Hanuman was watching as he was jumping from place to place. Everything was in chaos, nobody knew what to do. A single monkey had created all of this. People were, their buildings were burning, they were jumping out of the top floors, they were on fire, nobody knew what to do, they were running in circles, they were screaming, they had armies, they had weapons, they didn't know where to go, he created total chaos. And Hanumanji then jumped to the ocean to put his tail out, then jumped on a high mountain and was thinking, *what about Sita? Has she been harmed by the fire that I created? If so then I have totally failed.* He was so worried about Sita, but then a divine being came to Hanuman and told that Sita is safe, under the same tree in Ravana's garden. Hanumanji then, with thunderous voice, spoke so that every single person in Sri Lanka could hear him, without a sound system. He said, "Ravana, I am just one insignificant servant of Rama! Send back Sita now, otherwise Rama, Laxmana and army of millions of monkeys like me will come to destroy you!" And then, with a roar, "Jai Sri Rama!"

Hanuman's Return

Hanumanji jumped back across the ocean. Meanwhile, Angada and the whole group of monkeys that were waiting on the other shore, they didn't know what was happening, they were just waiting for Hanumanji. Some of them were fasting and standing in yoga posture on one leg until Hanuman would return. And when Hanuman came, they saw on the horizon as he was soaring through the air, and he was chanting Rama's name so blissfully. As soon as they heard his chanting and saw his face they knew that he was successful and they were cheering and jumping and clapping and celebrating. And Hanuman came down and told the whole story to them.

Their whole life was just to please Rama. See, this is the nature of devotees. They don't care who gets the credit. They just want to see the Lord happy. No one was envious. Their hearts were bursting with joy. Hanuman is successful. Rama will be so pleased with Hanuman. That was the perfection of all of their life, that Sita was pacified.

Angada said, "Now that we know exactly what's happened, let's go to Lanka and destroy the rest of the city and bring Sita back. Jambavana said, "No, it is the glory of Rama, that he should do." "That is the will of Sita." Hanuman said. So they immediately very fast they went back to Kishkinta, where we are sitting today and just in the outskirts, some of you will go there tomorrow, it is still there, there is a place called Madhuvan, its very sweet forest.

That was Sugriva's favorite garden. It had nice fruit trees and there was honey there and bees, and there was a keeper, a very close associate of Sugriva, named Dadimukha and he was protecting that garden. Angada, Hanuman and all the others, they went into Madhuvan to celebrate the great victory of Hanuman. And they were drinking the honey and eating the fruits and jumping around and the garden was being destroyed and he was trying to stop them and they were just laughing and celebrating. And Dadimukha went to Sugriva, who was in Rama's cave. Four months, during the monsoons he was in that cave and then practically another month he was waiting for Sugriva while he was enjoying. And then, it was almost two months that Hanuman and the others were away, Rama was in that cave in separation for Sita between five and six months. And Sugriva was there with him just waiting for the devotees to come back. And as soon as Dadimukha came and said, "They are destroying your garden, they are celebrating, they are laughing!" Sugriva was so happy. He said, "That means they must have found Sita, send them here immediately!" and Angada began to explain to Rama everything that Hanuman told him. And then Rama asked Hanumanji, "Please tell me, tell me everything that Sita has said to you, everything and what is her condition." Hanuman said everything and Ramacandra said, "Tell me again, everything!" And Hanuman explained everything, and Rama said that, "Tell me again." Hanuman told the secret message of the crow on the stone in Chitrakut and then he presented Rama the golden jewel of Sita.

The Inconceivable Love of Rama and Hanuman

When Rama saw he began to cry incessantly in love. He put that jewel tightly to his heart and he said, "On the day of my marriage with Sita, king Janaka placed this jewel on the head of my beloved Sita. It was given to him by Indra." And Rama was describing with so much affection how beautiful Sita was wearing that jewel. He told Hanuman, "You risked your life, you jumped across an ocean and back, you faced Ravana directly, you burnt down the majority of his city and most of all, you gave such happiness to Sita and you brought her message and her love back to me! There is no way I can repay you. I am living in a forest, I have nothing. The only thing I can give you is my heart, my life, in the form of my embrace." Sri Ramacandra then, with tears pouring from his eyes of love and gratitude for Hanuman, he embraced. One of the greatest events in the history of the world, where we were sitting yesterday, is the very place where all of Hanuman's innermost desires were fulfilled. Rama was pleased with him and embraced him.

Rama was conquered by the love of Hanuman and the Hanuman was conquered by the love of Rama, this is bhakti. When we conquer our ego through humble devotional services, then we become totally conquered by the sweetness and the love of Lord Krishna and that love conquer Krishna. In this spirit Hanuman with great happiness cried out the holy name.

And all the monkeys around, seeing Rama's love and gratitude to Hanuman, they had no envy. They had the greatest happiness to see another devotee getting the special blessings and mercy of the Lord. And they all raised their arms dancing to celebrate the good fortune of Hanuman by chanting the holy names: Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare | Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare||

Rama then asked Hanuman, "We will go to attack Lanka; tell me what you saw." Hanuman was so meticulous, he memorized when he was jumping from building to building with his tail on fire. He was doing so many services. He was constantly chanting the holy names, he was giving happiness to Sita, he was teaching Ravana a good lesson, but he was also looking at everything and gave a complete report of how Lanka was built and all the different military phalanxes and gave strategic explanations of how they could march into Lanka. Laxmana jumped on Angada's shoulder; Rama jumped on Hanuman's shoulder.

There were all the monkeys from all the directions who had assembled; they all marched from Kishkinda Kshetra to the shore of the ocean.

Govardhana Lila

There is a story of Hanuman and the Govardhana. They came to the shore. Once I start, then It will be another talk, but they were getting all these big stones. And Hanuman was bringing mountains to build the bridge across the Indian ocean and he was going all over and he came to Vrindavana and he came to Govardhana hill. And Hanuman was going to pick up Govardhana hill and bring it to be part of the bridge across the Indian Ocean. And Govardhana hill said, "No no , I am here waiting for Krishna or Rama" And Rama told Giri Govardhana about his mission, how Rama is building a bridge to get Sita to come back, to get Rama to be reunited with Sita. So Govardhana was enthusiastic to go. She said, "Ok, take me." It was just at that time Hanuman was sent a message that the bridge was complete, they didn't need any more hills or mountains or stones. So Govardhana was really sad, she wanted to do some seva for Rama. She said, "Please tell Rama that I really want to do some service." So Hanuman had such love for Giriraj, he jumped all the way to the shore and told Rama how Giriraj wanted to help. And Rama said, "Go back and tell Giriraj that he should be in Braj bhumi. In my next incarnation he will give me the greatest pleasure by serving the gopis and Sri Radha and the gopas and the cows and I will even lift him up with a little finger of my left hand." So Hanuman jumped back to Govardhana hill and gave that message to Govardhana and Govardhana said, waiting for Krishna to appear. So we will just have a few minutes kirtan and then everyone I believe we could bathe in Pampa sarovar, and visit the cave of Shabari, if you have already haven't done so, then we will return for Prasad and please do come this evening for our Govardhana puja celebration.

Sri Hampi Yatra Day 4 - evening: Story of Mother Sita Reunites with Lord Rama

Yesterday we spoke at Pampa Sarovar about the past times of Rama, Laxmana residing here where we sit (Kishikinda Kshetra) along with the Vanaras headed by Sugriva, Hanuman, Jambavana. When Hanuman returned from Sri Lanka and presented to Lord Rama the jewel that was given to him by Sita and her message of love in separation, Lord Sri Rama embraced Hanuman and in doing so fulfilled all of Hanuman's deepest desires. Just as Srila Prabhupada writes in Sri Chaitanya Caritamrta: that Krishna doesn't see the thing that is offered, but he sees the intention. *patram puspam phalam toyam*

The Value of Intent

"The only value anything in this world has is to the extent we could use it to please Krishna. Arts, music, intelligence, architecture, strength, things, all of these things, if we understand that there Krishna is energy, and they're seeing as a facility to use for Krishna, they all have eternal value."

Srila Prabhupada was speaking in a microphone, he said, "This is spiritual energy. This microphone is beyond any price when we use it to please Krishna by speaking his glories and sharing them with others. Otherwise it's just a piece of metal, which really has no value whatsoever for the eternal soul.

"So the way we speak, the way we smile, the way we look, the way we talk, the way we utilize whatever we may have, if our consciousness is to please Krishna, every single detail is so precious."

And similarly Krishna embraced Hanuman. What is an embrace, putting your arms around someone, it only lasts a couple seconds but it was the intent. That embrace was a gesture of Krishna to his devotee that *I am satisfied with you, I am so pleased with you, I am your property*. And for Hanuman, his jumping across the ocean, his burning Sri Lanka, his

mighty roar, it wasn't just a show of strength, it was all just his ways of expressing his gratitude and his love and his will to serve Lord Rama. This is bhakti.

"Everything of this world has its potential sacredness if we understand the truth of why it's created. It's not created for us to enjoy, it's created for us to utilize for service and through the association of the devotees, through our sadhana, through our prayer and through our practice we develop this view of the world."

Hanumanji then explained to Rama all the details about the layout of Sri Lanka and how the military was organized because there was going to be a great war. And although Sri Ramacandra, he is the source of the Virat Rupa, he could easily just manifest this universal form and just, with one glance, burn Sri Lanka to ashes. But that's not going to melt our hearts with love for him the same way as when he performs his t. And although he's all-powerful, his opulence of renunciation or detachment is he accepts a position like a human being and he facilitates depending on Hanuman and the Vanaras to assist him.

The Greatest Power

So Rama jumped on Hanuman's shoulder, Laxmana jumped on Angada's shoulder and Hanuman and Angada jumped to the shore of the Southern Ocean. Meanwhile in Sri Lanka, just recently, Hanuman had burned a major part of the whole city and before he left he roared his message, "Return Sita or millions of monkeys as powerful as me along with Rama and Laxmana, from whom we gain all our powers, are going to come to destroy your whole dynasty" So Ravana called a very serious assembly of all of his leaders, his ministers, relatives, generals and he told them that "We see that what this one monkey has done to Sri Lanka. Now there's going to be millions of them marching along with Rama and Laxmana and they are demanding that I give Sita back, but I will not give Sita. I have already given my heart to her and I will not take it back - She will be mine. I will never give up and succumb to anyone's demands." Srila Prabhupada give so many nice instructions in Srimad-Bhagavatam, he says, "Even the greatest conquerors, they go out and conquer lands and empires and they come home and they're conquered by their mind and senses for lustful enjoyment." That is why in the Vedic culture, for a real spiritual culture, people who can control their senses are considered to be real conquerors and they are offered respect.

"We see how Dasratha Maharaj bowed his head to Viswamitra Muni, and throughout the great Puranas, Mahabharata, Ramayana, we find even kings, how they bow down to those sages, rishis and Vaishnavas who have no selfish desires. That's the greatest power. Because that power of humble service conquers the ego and ultimately conquers the heart of the Supreme soul."

Exchanges Between Ravana and the Rakshasas

But Ravana, he was so proud, so arrogant, he proclaimed "I am willing to fight to death, but I will not give up Sita. So now let us plan how we are going to fight this war." One of the generals said, "Why don't you just forcibly enjoy Sita? Why you're harassing her and waiting and waiting and waiting?" Rama told them all a lie. He said, "Sita promised me after one year she would surrender to me and accept me as her husband. But Rama wants to come before that year is expired— there is only one month left." [The general replied] "So why don't force her." Ravana said, "I can't." because years before, he disclosed a secret that very few people knew about, there was an Apsara named Rambha and Ravana went to violate her chastity. And that caused so much pain to her husband, Nalakuvera, that he was cursed and that curse came from such a pained place in her husband's heart that even Lord Brahma confirmed the curse, that if ever he tried to enjoy a woman against her will, he would immediately die. So he explained, "We will fight this war to the end and we will be victorious."

So all the generals, they were so clouded in illusion and they just wanted to tell Ravana what Ravana wanted to hear. Prahastha was the commander in chief, he said, "I could single-handedly destroy every monkey including Hanuman, what to speak of Rama and Laxmana, just order me and I'll go and devastate them all immediately right now, I have my bow in my hand just give me the order! He said, the only reason why Hanuman was able to do what he did is because we were not expecting him, he took us by surprise. If we were prepared, I would have single-handedly destroy that useless monkey in a moment. Just give me the order!" He was roaring. And then another of the great generals, Mahodadhy, stood up and he said the same thing, "Ravana you have defeated Indra! You have nothing to fear, no one can stand before you in battle, you are the supreme ultimate strength in this universe and with your powers just give me the order I will single-handedly wipe them all out." Ravana was becoming really excited to hear all these people speaking. Then Kumbhakarana spoke, Kumbhakarana was Ravana's very big little brother. When he spoke he roared, he was gigantic, he said, "Ravana, why are you asking our advice now? Why didn't you ask our advice before you kidnapped Sita? Don't you know it's completely against religious principles to steal another man's wife when he's not around the way you did? You don't have any of the strength of dharma behind you. Because of the weakness of your mind and senses you did this, why didn't you ask us before? What you did is a condemned deed, you deserve to suffer! But because I am your brother, whatever you've done in the past, however wicked and wrong it was, I will destroy them." So Ravana was insulted, but very happy. And then all of them were standing up and telling how great they were, and how powerful they were and how Ravana was undefeatable and there was nothing to worry about, "Let the armies come of the monkeys, we are prepared!" and sitting on the other side of Ravana from Kumbhakarana, was Vibhisana, the youngest brother, and he stood up. He said, "All these people who are speaking Ravana, they don't know anything about truth. They are just totally infatuated and intoxicated by their false egos and therefore they cannot see what's before them. One monkey has destroyed our kingdom. Ravana is the supreme Lord Vishnu! Just by his glance, he can destroy you! You took his pleasure potency, Sita! He is going to destroy you! Give back Sita! I love my relatives, Ravana you're my brother, I love *you*. I am telling you the truth with passion and compassion give back Sita or everything we value in life is going to be lost." But all these generals, they are all speaking what you want them to speak because of their arrogance and because their fear of you and because you give them so many favors. But real love is to speak the truth even when it's unpalatable for the welfare of another." Ravana was very upset.

Indrajit, the eldest son of Ravana, he was furious, he started screaming at his uncle Vibhisana. [He said,] "How could you call yourself a rakshasa? Rakshasas are known for their heroism and valor and fearlessness. You are coward, you've taken shelter of the enemy. My father, he has nothing to fear from these humans or monkeys. I myself with my arrow and my clubs and javelins can destroy them all. Shame on you, you're not fit to be my uncle, you're not to be fit in this family, you're simply a coward." Vibhisana told Indrajit, "You are a fool. So young and so ignorant and so arrogant, you don't know, you call yourself the son of your father but you are his worst enemy. Ravana, Sita is like a poisonous snake that you have wrapped around your own neck, and the beauty of Sita is the poison that's going to kill you. She belongs to Rama, give her back."

Ravana was so upset. He stood up from his elegant throne and screamed, roared at Vibhisana, "You, although my brother, have taken the side of my enemy. Therefore, you are to be killed. I would kill you at this moment but because you're my brother, I will not do that. But I reject you. Everything you have, I have given you. I have ruled over the kingdom that you have resided in your whole life with valor and bravery, and look what I have done from all the citizens, but you have no gratitude. Out of fear, you have taken shelter of my enemy. Therefore I reject you." He spoke so harshly to Vibhisana. Vibhisana's heart was broken because he really cared, but there was just nothing he could

do. So by his own mystic powers his body rose, and four of his associates rose with him. Vibhisana, he said, "With a very broken and sad heart, I leave you Ravana. You will be destroyed because of your own arrogance and lust and greed." And then he said a loving but compassionate goodbye to Ravana and he and his four assistants crossed over the ocean.

Vibhisana Joins Lord Rama

The monkeys they saw these five gigantic rakshasas in the sky and Vibhisana said, "Bring me your leader." Sugriva came with Hanuman, he looked up and Vibhisana said, "I am the brother of Ravana. I have instructed him, I have pleaded with him to give Sita back but he will not. I have come to take shelter of Rama, bring me to Rama." Sugriva ran to Rama and said, "There's these five rakshasas who have come, one is the brother of Ravana. He says he wants to take shelter of you, he wants to join us! We should kill him, we can't trust him - he is a rakshasa. We should punish him, we should imprison him or we should kill him, but he must be rejected. Because after all, if we put any confidence in him, he could cause it havoc to our whole army." Rama asked the opinion of some of the other monkey leaders and they all had more or less the same opinion as Sugriva, [Sugriva said,] "He should be at the most, killed, at the least he should be imprisoned, punished and rejected.

Hanuman was quiet, Rama asked Hanuman, "What do you think?" Hanuman said, "I saw Vibhisana's face, and I heard the tone of his voice, I have complete trust in his sincerity. He's come to take shelter of you, we should accept him as one of our brothers in our family and put our full faith in him. I saw, when I was face to face with Ravana, Ravana was about to kill me and Vibhisana argued like fire- to spare my life. He is your devotee, he has come to surrender, give him your mercy." Rama said, "Yes, bring Vibhisana; I will give him my full shelter." Sugriva was really upset, because after all he's the Commander-in-Chief, he's in charge of all the armies, he has to deal with everything. We have seen sometimes the people who actually manage projects, they become very disturbed when a leader gives some instructions that are very difficult to- the leader goes away but they have to deal with it. So Sugriva said, "No this is insane, What are you saying!? Hanuman, Rama, he is Ravana's brother! They have the same blood, they are the sons of the Visravas! He might have got in a family quarrel with Ravana now, and he is angry and he is serious, but when it really comes to the point of you dying or Ravana dying, he is going to take the side of his brother! We can't trust him. And that is when Rama proclaimed that, "This is my solemn vow, that anyone who, even once with a sincere heart, says 'My dear Lord, I am yours' I will give that person complete shelter and protection for the rest of eternity. Even if Ravana were to come before me today to seek shelter, I would accept him. Bring Vibhisana now."

Vibhisana came down to the ground with tears of humility in his eyes and he bowed down at the feet of Lord Sri Ramacandra and he expressed his heart, "I am your devotee. I have seen the misery and suffering that my brother has put your eternal consort, your loving wife Sita in, and I begged him and pleaded with him. But he is so obsessed with his arrogant ways he will not listen to anyone. I am with you Rama, I know everything about the rakshasas, I know all their strengths and all their weaknesses. I will tell you everything." Rama was so pleased. He picked up Vibhisana and embraced him. Then he told Laxmana, "Go get water from the sea" And with that water, on Rama's command, Laxmana performed an abhisek and consecrated Vibhisana as the king of Sri Lanka.

After Vibhisana was telling Rama all very, very crucial information about Ravana's army and about his fortress, they looked out at the sea - and in those days what we now call the Indian Ocean, it was a massive sea, it was 800 miles, a 100 yogjanas to Sri Lanka and there were huge waves- Rama asked Vibhisana, "How should we cross the ocean with all of our armies?" Vibhisana told Rama that "Your family, the Ikshavaku or solar dynasty,

has a very special connection with the Lord of the ocean, perform meditation on the sea shore and ask the god of the sea himself how you could cross it." Lord Rama, who is Parameshwar, the supreme controller of all controllers, out of humility to respect and honor the position of Samudra, the Lord of the sea, he put a *kusha* grass mat down in the sand and sat in meditation and prayer for three days fasting.

After three days, Sri Rama manifested disappointment and anger. Disappointment that he was, according to dharma, with humble respect trying to give honor to the Lord of the sea even though he didn't have to. But his anger was to teach Samudra and all the rest of us a good lesson. The Lord's anger is not like our anger. When the Lord becomes angry, it's out of love, it's out of compassion, it's to make a very strong statement for everyone's benefit. Rama turned to Laxmana and said, "I have been patient, I have been humble, I have been very respectful and Samudra, because he's such a big big demigod with such wealth all the sea and everything else, he is not giving any attention to me. In this world, where people are so selfish, so much in bodily and mental conceptions of life, they consider humility and respect and good manners to be a sign of weakness. When people are harsh and haughty and pushy, that's considered a strong person. If this is the only language that he understands, then see what I will do." And Rama's eyes became red like coals. And it appeared that just by his glance he was going to burn the universe to ashes, and then he took an arrow to his bow, it became many arrows and they were flaming and they entered into the ocean, and they were so empowered with heat that the whole ocean started boiling. There were massive gigantic waves and whales and timingla fish and all kinds of other creatures were screaming and jumping trying to get out of the ocean and coming back and jumping out. And at that point, Samudra Dev, the personified deity of the ocean, he came out with folded palms and beautiful jewels to offer to Rama and said, "Please forgive me but it's my nature, you know how oceans are, we are very uncrossable.

"Even these great demigods, yesterday we spoke about Indra, Samudra, they are great great personalities, they're great devotees, but the power of material nature is it can distract us and cause us to forget. And that forgetfulness is when we think that I am the doer, I am the proprietor. And the great devotees of the Lord, when they offer prayers, that's their prayer that they never fall victim to being the enjoyer, the proprietor, the doer. Their prayer is always to be the servant of the servant of the servant which means to recognize our true position."

Building of the Bridge

But Lord Rama, for these great great personalities like Samudra, knows what he has to do to remind them. Samudra told Rama that, "I will facilitate building a bridge across my ocean. Nala and Nila, two of your great monkey generals, they are the sons of Vishwakarma, and Nala especially, he's empowered by his father with the same abilities. Put him as the chief engineer for this project and there will be no impediment." So when Nala this order from Rama, he became very enthusiastic, and he started giving all these orders to all the other monkeys in the army, to get stones and to get trees and to get vines to tie them all together to build a bridge. And everyone was so enthusiastic, because time was the essence. So they were jumping all over the world getting rocks and mountains and they were piling them up all at the seashore. And meanwhile, Ravana, he had spies disguising themselves like monkeys going over and see what was happening, they were coming back and reporting to him. They were taking— according to each of their capacity, they were all helping to build the bridge. About 1/5 of the bridge was built in the first day. Its 800 miles across, it took five days to build the bridge. And as they were building it, Hanuman, it was his inspiration that Rama is non-different than his name, because yogis are always performing the recitation of mantras, especially the mystics, and if we see even in the Puranic times, or those of Ramayana, even the great warriors they chant special mantras to invoke certain powers.

Hanumanji, he had total faith that the supreme mantra is the name of God, just the name *Rama* is perfect and complete in itself, everything is included. Put the name of Rama, whether it's on a little stone or a massive mountain peak, it will float. But it's not only floating, because the ocean has all these giant waves and everything, so how to keep them all together, even if they are floating? They're getting huge vines from all over the areas and they were trying to tie it all together, tie all the rocks together. But Hanuman's wisdom, the name of Rama, if we make that the center then it unites all of us. So all of the stones floated and all of the stones were united in the name of Rama.

It is one interesting story when Rama, in his humility, "Just see the power of my name", it's not a small thing, a bridge made out of rocks and stones and mountain peaks and trees and everything else you can think of, that's a 80 miles wide and 800 miles long, and was built in five days. In Mumbai, that one little bridge that goes from Worli to - where is it? - to Bandra, took about 10 years, it's only about 5 miles! And nothing floats, it's over the sea but they had to build all kinds of foundations and everything else, and there's only 8 lanes, this is 80 miles wide. So Rama, "If my name has this power, what powers I must have!" And he went to a secluded place and threw a stone in the sea, and it sank! And Hanuman was behind him and Hanumanji said, "My Lord, whoever takes shelter of you, and you accept within your hands, they never fall, they never sink. But people who, by their own free will, want to leave you and they leave from the shelter of your hands, immediately they will sink. So when you let go of these stones, they sank but because you're not different than your name, wherever your name is chanted with sincerity, you will never let your devotees fall." So Rama was very happy.

And there is that famous story of the little squirrel, some say spider, maybe there were both. But the squirrel jumped out of the water, he was all wet and he rolled in the sand and then he came out and he shook his hairs and was putting little grains of sand on the rocks- that was his contribution. Hanumanji was holding mountain peaks! And he [the squirrel] was giving a grain of sand. And Rama told Hanuman, to Hanuman's great happiness, he said "The squirrel is doing as much as you. To me, a grain of sand and a mountain, there's no difference. It's the devotion. He is doing the best he could do.

"This is the beautiful thing about bhakti. We see in this material world, there are so many categories of skills and intelligence and wealth and abilities and all of these things that create such inequality. But in bhakti, it's not at all dependent on what we know or what we can do or what we have. It's dependent on our sincerity to please Krishna."

Srila Prabhupada, he tells a story about that old Bengali widow, actually in November there is going to be a very auspicious event at Radha Gopinath temple. I think it's on the 14th or 16th, it's on a Sunday but our very dear God sister and one of the most beloved disciples of Srila Prabhupada, Yamuna devi, Srila Prabhupada took her physically from the world a few years ago, but before she passed from this world, she wrote a book of her memories of Srila Prabhupada. And her very dear associates Dinatarini Devi, Kartamasha Prabhu and others helped to complete this book. And it's going to be released at Radha Gopinath Temple in November. And she talks about this old Bengali widow, because she was there. Srila Prabhupada spoke about her and some of his lectures that Yamuna Devi used to talk to her, she was good friends with her. She was a very simple lady, she didn't have much education, she had no money, she was very old, she was not very healthy, but every morning she would come with a pot of water that she would personally collect from the river Yamuna and just present it to the pujaris to use for Radha Damodar's service. Early every morning, she didn't make any introduction to herself, she would just quietly come and put the pot of water down and leave. Nobody knew she existed- except Radha Damodar. And Srila Prabhupada, from his room, used to see her coming just put the water down. And it moved him so much, he used her as an example of a true saint. She was doing what she could do for Krishna's pleasure.

"So whether you're Hanuman or whether you're squirrel, we all have equal opportunity to attain the perfection of life. And we shouldn't get bewildered by the false ego and start comparing ourselves to others on the basis of material results, because then we become depressed or become envious or we become arrogant. To actually see that quality in ourselves and see that quality in others, it's our humility, our sincerity and our will to please the Lord and follow the Lord in our guru's teachings, with an earnest heart, that's all-important."

So all the monkeys, and Hanumanji was so intelligent, he even got the fish, he engaged them all in Rama's service! Underneath the ocean, even the little fish they were contributing things to the bridge so that everyone could go back home back to God! It's not that Hanumanji was thinking, *look at me what I'm doing*, he was doing everything he could do, but he was appreciating the squirrel, he was appreciating the fish who was under the rocks just pushing it up.

"Rama doesn't need the fish, Rama doesn't need Hanuman but we need to serve and Rama makes it that he needs that little squirrel and Hanuman because that's the nature of his spirit to appreciate. And this is very important, that we learn to appreciate. It is a great virtue. And when we appreciate people's spiritual qualities, and when we appreciate whatever efforts they're making sincerely to serve, that appreciation is actually an expression of our will to love Krishna and Krishna will reciprocate."

Anyone can criticize but to appreciate, Srila Prabhupada appreciated even people who had no Dharma or anything, if they just had the slightest desire to connect with Krishna in any way, he would appreciate that so much, and by doing that he would bring the best out in everyone.

Mood of the Monkey Soldiers

After the bridge was complete, Hanuman welcomed Rama on his shoulder, Angad welcomed Laxmana and they very quickly marched across the ocean, what a site that was! The monkeys were really enthusiastic. They were jumping, they were leaping, they were howling in ecstasy because they were about to fight for Rama, didn't matter if they lived or died, they were going to fight for Rama, to bring Sita back to Rama! They all saw the pains of Rama's heart, they all heard from Hanuman, the pains in Sita's heart. Their only purpose in life was to reunite Sita Rama and they were so enthusiastic with the challenge, what was gonna to happen, what kind of war, They had heard from Vibhisana about the unbelievable, incredible armies of Ravana. In Srimad-Bhagavatam, there is a purport where Srila Prabhupada explains Ravana had millions and millions of soldiers, they were trained warriors, they were mystic yogis and they had the most highly sophisticated weapons to fight with. And in Rama's army, in the whole army there were only two weapons. Rama and Laxmana, both had bows and arrows, none of the monkeys had anything. Doesn't even say in Ramayana, as far as I remember, that Hanuman even had his club there. They were just picking up trees and rocks and throwing, and their teeth, and their nails, and their fists, and their knees but they were fearless! Here they were, they were confronting the most powerful army and arsenal in the entire universe that conquered Indra and they were fearless and all they had was their enthusiasm to serve! And Srila Prabhupada wrote that this was Rama's arrangement, he wanted to show.

"Even if you make all the best possible material arrangements, if you are not on the side of dharma, if you're not on the side of Rama, it's just the matter of time till you lose everything."

The monkeys had that faith and when they reached over to Sri Lanka, they were ready. and Ravana was ready, and the battle began.

Battle between Rama and Ravana

I would just like to cite one or two very well-known incidents of Hanumanji's incredible devotion. Throughout the battle of Lanka, Hanuman was always right there. His enthusiasm to serve everywhere, everyone. But at one time, Prahasta was killed, the commander-in-chief, by Nala who just threw a rock on his head. Prahasta has chariots and horses and charioteers and armies all over him and shooting weapons and chanting mantras and has javelins and clubs and all kinds of nuclear things and Nala just takes a rock and throws it on his head. Ravana was shocked. And so many others, same thing was happening, and finally, it was getting so bad that Ravana said, "Wake up Kumbhakarana."

Now in one sense this was a very good thing but another, it was a mistake because Kumbhakarana - the demigods approached Brahma when he was given giving benedictions to Ravana and Suparnakha and Vibhisana and Ravana and Ravana was getting all kinds of powers where he couldn't be killed by anybody who could possibly be a threat to him but he didn't say humans or monkeys because they were below his dignity to even mention their names. And he was getting all the yogic siddhis, and he was getting long lives, cut off his head it grows back, cut off his arms it grows back, he was getting all these incredible boons from Brahma that he could conquer the universe. And Vibhisana, he performed *tapasya* also and the only blessing he asked for, is to always remember his beloved Lord and to always please his beloved Rama by being the servant of the servant of the servant of his servants, that is the only blessing. Vibhisana could have asked for the same things as Ravana, but he was self-satisfied. He was a devotee. Brahma asked Kumbhakarana, "What benedictions do you want?" because they did thousands of years of severe *tapasya*. And the demigods went to Brahma and said, "Even without any benedictions, he is so giant and so cruel, he just eats everything and everyone. If he has any blessings, *if you just leave him as he is*, he will exterminate all life in the universe by eating everything!" So Brahma arranged for goddess Saraswati to come into his mouth, and Brahma said, "What benediction would you like?" and Saraswati spoke through his mouth, "Sleep." Brahma said, "So be it." Kumbhakarana said, "I didn't mean to say that!" It was too late. So he would sleep for six months and then he'd be awake for one day. And in that one day, he would eat what people can't eat in thousands of years, then he would go to sleep. But in that one day, he was totally indestructible and undefeatable. But the day of his being awake, he already chastised Ravana, that was the day when he held his court. But now it was an emergency so Ravana said, "Wake-up Kumbhakarana." And there is a whole story in Valmiki Ramayana of how they had to wake him up but eventually he woke up. But, he was vulnerable because it was his sleeping time and ultimately Rama vanquished Kumbhakarana. Ravana could not believe this. He sent some of his other sons, who were really great heroes, and they were vanquished.

So now Ravana is really becoming depressed, and his own wife Mandodri saying, "Just give back Sita, look at all of our children are being killed, your brothers being killed, your other brothers betrayed, just give back!" Ravana could not listen. It was really becoming depressed. But then Indrajit, the most powerful of everyone in Sri Lanka, he spoke with such confidence that "Today I will destroy Rama and Sita will be yours." and Ravana said "Yes" He had great confidence in Indrajit.

Indrajit's Secret Weapon

Indrajit went to a temple where he performed his puja. It's very interesting, even in those days, these demons, these demons were really powerful, even if they hated God, they got their power from demigods. In other words, in those days, all of them, they all had the sense that there is higher personal powers than ourselves, and by pleasing these personal powers, we can get these powers. So Indrajit went to perform *yajna* to Agni dev and he was an extremely intense personality. He was performing this *yajna*, he already had such incredible supernatural powers and he somehow got the favor of Brahma and he was given

a special Brahmastra, a weapon of Brahma that had to be victorious and could not be counteracted. And he came into the battlefield, and by his supernatural yogic abilities, Indrajit was invisible, and his weapons were invisible, and they were the weapons of Agni and the weapons of Brahma! And he had massive armies around him and armies were fighting and all the monkeys were fighting with the army of Indrajit but there were these arrows and clubs and axes and javelins and everything showering down and they couldn't see Indrajit to fight back and they couldn't even see the weapons to counteract them and they were just, they were being crushed. Jambavana was unconscious, laying on the ground. Angada was practically dead; Sugriva was laying, then Nala and Nila. Within a short amount of time, the monkeys, they were just trying to look, "Where is this, where the weapons coming from, we can't even see the weapons, we can't even see the person, how do you fight somebody like this?" It was impossible. After some time, the entire army of the monkeys was laying unconscious, totally covered with Indrajit's weapons, he was just laughing. And then he attacked Rama and Laxmana. They were being covered by these arrows. And Rama told Laxmana, "We have to honor Lord Brahma. Brahma gave them benediction, Indrajit, that his weapon would not fail, that it would be victorious, that nothing could counteract it, so let us just tolerate." And soon Rama and Laxmana were covered by arrows and were laying on the battlefield - unconscious. Indrajit looked down, there were just few monkeys left, they were just the foot soldiers, he didn't care about them. All the generals, all the powerful people and Rama and Laxmana, as far as he could see, they were all dead.

Jambavana's Instruction to Hanuman

So he took his invisible chariot and he went back to the place where he was going to continue his worship to get even greater powers. But first, he went and told Ravana, "My dear father, the work is done, enjoy Sita. Rama and Laxmana are and that crazy monkey is dead." And Ravana was so happy, and he reported to Sita, "You see, they are all dead." Sita was in pain. One of the Rakshasi women, Srijata, and Vibhisana's wife, Sarala, informed Sita, "Actually they're not dead, they are just sleeping for some time."

But anyways Hanuman and Vibhisana, they were wounded but Hanuman couldn't be killed. Vibhisana, Indrajit, because Indrajit is Vibhisana's brother, he just like threw this javelin through his shoulder and he was laying there with wrapped pain but he didn't die, but he was looking for Hanuman as he knew Hanuman couldn't be killed. And he found Hanuman and Vibhisana said, "We have to go find Jambavana" And it's night, so they had torch and they're going through the battlefield somehow or other looking for Jambavana and there's millions. I think, according to Valmiki Ramayana, I think that night Indrajit defeated 67 crores of monkeys. He was a powerful warrior. They were laying there, they all seemed dead.

And they're going through all these bodies and finally they came to Jambavana. And Jambavana, he was old and he was covered with these javlins and axes and arrows of Indrajit, he was in so much pain, he was laying there and Vibhisana said, "Jambavana, we were searching for you." And Jambavana said, "I am in so much pain, I can't even see but I can hear your voice, but just tell me one thing: Where is Hanuman?" Vibhisana was really surprised by that question. He said, "Why are you asking about Hanuman, why you're not asking about Rama? You are not asking about Rama, why you are asking Hanuman? Jambavana said, "Because if Hanuman is alive, whoever is dead with us will come alive; But if Hanuman is dead, we will all die. Bring Hanuman. But Hanuman was standing right there and Hanumanji is so humble to his superior Jambavana, Hanuman fell at Jambavana's feet and put his feet on his head. And Hanuman said to Jambavana, "How may I serve? Jambavana said, "You are the only one who could save us. Rama has empowered you, it is his will. Rama and Laxmana are not dead, they are just honoring Brahma's weapon, but they are unconscious." and when Rama came to consciousness and saw Laxmana laying there, he was crying. Jambavana told Hanumanji that "You have to go

immediately to the Himalayas. There is a mountain in the Himalayas called Rishabh and from the peak of the Rishabh mountain you will see Mount Kailash, in between, there is an incredible mountain that has light like fire. There it's endowed with supernatural healing herbs. From that mountain, you must get four herbs: the Sanjivani karana, Vishalya karana. Sanjivani karana can bring dead people back to life. Vishalya karani can heal any type of wound in a body. The Suvarna karani can restore the body to its full strength and vigor. And the Sandani can heal and join all bones that are broken and dislocated. He said, "You must get these four herbs and bring them back, and not only Rama and Laxmana, but the entire monkey army will come back to life and have full strength. But you have to do it immediately, by tomorrow it will be too late."

Hanuman Sets out for the Herbs

So Hanumanji went to the top of Trikuta Mountain and cried out "Jai Sri Rama, Jai Sri Rama, Jai Sri Rama!" He jumped, jumped across the ocean, he went past Kishkinta Kshetra, the Vindhya Mountains, Dandakaranya Forest, he was going over and he came to the highest peaks of the Himalayas. And there on Rishabh hill, Rishabh Mountain, he saw Kailash, the abode of Siva, and between was often called the Gandamadana Mountain.

He went to get the herbs but somehow or other all the herbs entered into the mountain. They were all being hidden. So Hanuman couldn't find them, and he didn't have time to really start digging and searching, because time was the essence. So Hanumanji, *nothing* could impede his devotional service, that was the power of his enthusiasm.

"In the material sense, there's a saying, 'where there is a will there is a way', but in devotional service, when we take shelter of the Lord with the determined enthusiasm to serve, Krishna can empower us to do incredible things."

One time my dear God brother Vishnujana Swami Maharaj, he asked Srila Prabhupada that, "Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he could've spread the holy name into every town and village, that's what Nityananda— and he predicted, and Bhaktivinoda Thakur, he was such a great saint, he could've spread the holy name to every town and village, why didn't they do it? They had all powers!" Srila Prabhupada, very humble, he said, "Because they saved that service for me." And Srila Prabhupada never took credit for anything. If you want to understand what is the essence of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, what is the essence of Sri Caitanya Caritamrta in a practical way in which we could have the consciousness of living in this world, we just study the simple prayer that Prabhupada wrote on Jaladuta, "Krishna, if you like you can give me the power to speak to convince them of your message. They are so much, all these people in the western world and in India and everywhere else, are so much under the influence of the modes and passion and ignorance, how they will understand? But if you give me the words, by your grace they will be happy. Just make me your puppet and let me dance as you want me to dance." That's the spirit of Hanuman. He had such determination; there was nothing impossible. Prabhupada used to say, "Impossible is a word in a fool's dictionary."

Hanuman Delivers the Herbs

That was Hanuman's way of seeing the world. What has to be done has to be done because it's for Rama, "I can't find the herbs, Jambavana has already given me the instruction, I must get it back immediately." So Hanuman shook the mountain and took the peak off the mountain, gigantic peak, probably weighed millions and millions of tons. And he lifted it up and jumped back to Sri Lanka. And he came to Vibhisana and Jambavana, and they called Sisena. Jambavana took those herbs— Sisena was the doctor of the monkeys— he took the herbs and put them near the nose of Rama and Laxmana, and they opened their eyes and they stood up and Rama embraced Hanumanji. Every single one of the monkeys, they all woke up and all their wounds were healed, and their

health was completely restored, and every single monkey that was killed was brought back to life.

Ramayana explains that so many of Ravana's soldiers died, why they didn't come back to life, every single monkey that was killed came back to life because of this herbs that Hanumanji brought from the Himalayas. Because Ravana didn't want the monkeys to think that he was losing, so any rakshasa that died, other rakshasas were ordered to throw them in the ocean, so nobody would see that there was any deaths, so that the monkeys would not feel encouraged that they were making any progress. But you see his psychology worked against him, they went back to life, they were in the ocean. Hanumanji ki Jai.

On another occasion, Ravana was fighting against Laxmana and threw a special javelin that was endowed with supernatural powers, and it struck Laxmana's chest. And he appeared to be dead, Rama was crying and Hanuman went back to the Himalayas to bring back that same mountain with the same herbs to bring Laxmana back to life.

Hanuman Relieves Sita

Eventually Lord Sri Ramacandra, defeated Ravana and was victorious. Rama told Vibhisana to perform the last rites for his brother. Vibishan said, "How could I do that, he was such a demon! I am your devotee and he was your enemy, why should I perform the last rites for him and try to elevate his soul?" Rama said, "Any enmity between us is all only on the physical platform and mental platform. Now that he's dead it's all gone. Liberate his soul, perform the last rites, forgive him." After the last rites of Ravana, Rama told Hanuman, "Because of you, we are victorious in this battle. Go and give Sita the message that I will soon be sending Vibhisana to bring her, to reunite with me." Hanuman was so excited. He entered into Sri Lanka, he met with Sita and gave her the news, "Ravana is slain; Rama is victorious, he is waiting for you." Sita began to cry in such ecstasy. For almost 12 months, about 11 months, she was a prisoner of Ravana, 24 hours a day yearning to be reconnected with Rama. Every day he was threatening to kill her if she didn't surrender. Her heart was over-flooding with gratitude, she was praising Hanumanji, "Because you have facilitated my beloved Lord to win this great war, and because you have come on behalf of my Lord to give me this news, I shower all my blessings upon you, that your devotion, your love, your heroism will live forever in the hearts of all devotees. I give you my heart, I give you my life Hanuman. Please tell Rama that I am waiting, waiting for that moment to see him again." So Hanuman jumped over the wall and gave Rama her message.

Sita and Rama's Reunion

Then Rama told Vibhisana that, "You and your wife should have her take a nice bath, [because she didn't bathe the whole time] and put on beautiful ornaments and clothes and put her in the palanquin to come to see me." Vibhisana and Sarla, they gave the news to Sita, she said "I don't want to take a bath; I just want to see Rama." They said, "No no, this is his order, you must do." So they did an abhisek for her and they put beautiful garments and jewels and placed her in a palanquin, and brought her to where Rama was standing. And to everyone's great surprise, it was said that maybe everyone should go away so that Rama and Sita could meet privately, and Rama was just looking down very indifferently, he said, "No everyone should stay." And Sita came down, Rama didn't even look at her, he was looking at the ground, and he looked not happy at all. And Sita's heart was bursting for the desire to serve, to please and to be loved by Rama once again, but Rama showed no emotion externally. And while looking at the ground he said, "Sita you have been touched by another man, living with him for 11 months, I cannot take you back now. You could go anywhere you like." Sita burst into tears, Rama wouldn't even look at her. She said, "Rama, 24 hours a day I was only crying in separation, my heart was completely chaste, pure and faithful to you at every moment. How is it possible that you

could have any doubt in me? If you tell me, I can go anywhere I want, I will enter fire. If I in any way have displeased you even for a moment then I don't want to live. And she told Laxmana, "Build a pyre and I will enter into the fire." Everyone was looking at Rama and everyone was heartbroken. Everyone was seeing Sita crying and everyone was crying except Rama, even Laxmana was angry with Rama. But everyone was afraid to say anything to him because he looked so grave. Rama just indicated to Laxmana, *make the fire*. Laxmana is crying, his heart is breaking, he is taking wood, he builds a fire. Sita circumambulates Rama, her whole body is trembling, her heart is totally broken. [...] And Hanuman, Sugriva, Angad, Vibhisana, they don't know what to say, they don't know what to do.

Sita Enters the Fire

Sita tells Rama that, "If for a single fraction of a moment, I ever forgot you, or I ever considered to do anything but to please you, then let this body burn me. But if I have been for this entire 11 months completely chaste and pure and faithful for your pleasure and your service with my love for you, then this fire cannot burn me." The fire was blazing. She circumambulated the fire three times and then, with folded hands, she entered the fire. Rama was concealing his own emotions. His heart was totally breaking, when she entered the fire, even beyond his ability to restrain, tears started pouring from his eyes. And as she was in the fire, *blaze* surrounded by flames, Lord Brahma appeared on his carrier in the sky and proclaimed that, "Sita is completely pure, her chastity is the supreme emblem of her character, there should be no doubt." And suddenly, her body glowed, brighter than the fire, and Agni, the fire God, escorted her out and told Sri Rama that, "Her heart and her love for you is pure."

Rama Expresses His Heart to Sita

And Rama and Sita held hands, and then Rama, for the first time, looked in Sita's eyes; and Sita looked at Rama's eyes. And the total love of both of their hearts poured from each other's eyes into each other's hearts. And they stood silently and Rama told Sita, "Not for a moment did I have any doubts in you. Do you think if I had any questions I would've built that bridge across the ocean, I would've traveled across the length and breadth of most of India searching for you, crying for you, yearning for you, longing for you, would I have sent Hanuman to jump off of the sea and risk his life? But I had to do this, because for all time to come, people should always know that your love is completely pure. And that even living in such a place as Sri Lanka, being harassed threatened, intimidated, seduced and tempted by the greatest riches and the greatest powers in all the universe, not for a moment did you ever consider anything except how to please me with your love— there can be no doubt ever." When Rama was saying this to Sita, it was breaking his heart more than hers to say it, harsh words but he did it, so that she would be glorified for all eternity.

Hanuman is sent to Nandigram

Then it was time for Sita and Rama to return to Ayodhya and Rama again turned to Hanumanji. He said, "my brother Bharat, for the last 14 years, has been ruling over Ayodhya. He is living as a hermit in Nandigram, he's put my wooden shoes on the throne, but still he has the power over Ayodhya even though he's living in such a simple way as an ascetic. And in this world, on a subtle level, having power, having influence it affects people they get attached to it. I love my brother Bharat if he has even the slightest inclination to keep that position, then I will remain in the forest or I will be his assistant, but I don't want to take it away from him. Hanuman, you are expert at judging a person's heart, go to an Nandigram and tell Bharat that Sita and myself are reunited, and were coming back to Ayodhya. And if you sense even the slightest trace of sadness in his heart that he's good to lose what he has, then come back and tell me and I will not return." So Hanuman, with a loud roar of happiness, he cried out, "Jai Sri Rama!" and he jumped to Nandigram, which is on the outskirts of Ayodhya, it's a forest.

And there was Bharat, dressed in tree bark, eating roots and herbs, living in a little straw hut just like the one, even simpler than the one he saw Rama and Laxmana and Sita living in Chitrakoot. And every day Bharat would come and give his report to the sandals of Rama that were sitting on the throne of Ayodhya. Hanuman gave the message to Bharat, that Rama has been victorious in a battle with Ravana, he's reunited with Sita, the 14 years of his exile is over today. He is returning. Bharat, his eyes flooded with tears, his heart was dancing, he embraced Hanumanji. He said, "Every moment of every day for the past 14 years, I have only been yearning for this moment to come when Rama would return." Hanuman could see that he was genuinely sincere.

Seeing the purity of Bharat's love, which is equal to the purity and chastity of Sita's love, Hanuman rejoiced. Hanuman embraced Bharat, they were embracing each other and Bharat was saying, "Where is he, where is he?!" and Hanuman said, "He is coming, any moment he will be coming from that direction" And a few seconds later, Bharat said, "I don't see him, where is he" Hanuman said, "He is coming, he is coming." After a few minutes, [Bharat said,] "When is he coming? Are you sure he is coming?!" Hanuman said, "He is coming, he is coming!" and Bharat, every moment was like a yuga in his anticipation to see Rama again. Kaushalya, Satrugna, even Kaikiya after she was purified of her illusion, everyone in Ayodhya was simply breathing, their hearts were only beating with the expectation for Rama to return. [Bharat said] "Where is he? Are you sure he is coming?" Hanuman said, "Bharat, look in the horizon! The Pushpaka! Rama has come!" and they danced together, weeping in ecstasy chanting the holy names: *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare*.

The Pushpaka came down to the simple hermitage of Bharat. Rama stepped down, still with his matted hair and tree bark, and Bharat ran over to him to fall at Rama's feet but Rama picked him up and the two brothers embraced. After fourteen years of loving separation, they embraced. And Satrugna embraced his brother Laxmana. And the citizens of Ayodhya, so many of them had come to Nandigram to greet Rama. And in a little quiet corner, Kaushalya, Rama's loving mother, was just watching Rama interacting with Bharat, Satrugna and the citizens of Ayodhya, crying in ecstasy. Rama ran over to her and touched her lotus feet and she picked him up and embraced.

Directions to reach Hampi: Hampi is 13 km from the town of Hospet, which has nice accommodations available and has a railway station. It is in Bellary district and is 376 km from Bangalore, 385 km from Hyderabad and 266 km from Belgaum.

Shabari Drama: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BY2rGmu9_Gg

Mayapur TV: <http://Mayapur.tv> / **Vrindavana TV:** <https://vrindavan.tv/>

Holy Pilgrimages: www.Holy-Pilgrimages.com / **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/HolyPilgrimages

Holy Dham: www.HolyDham.com

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